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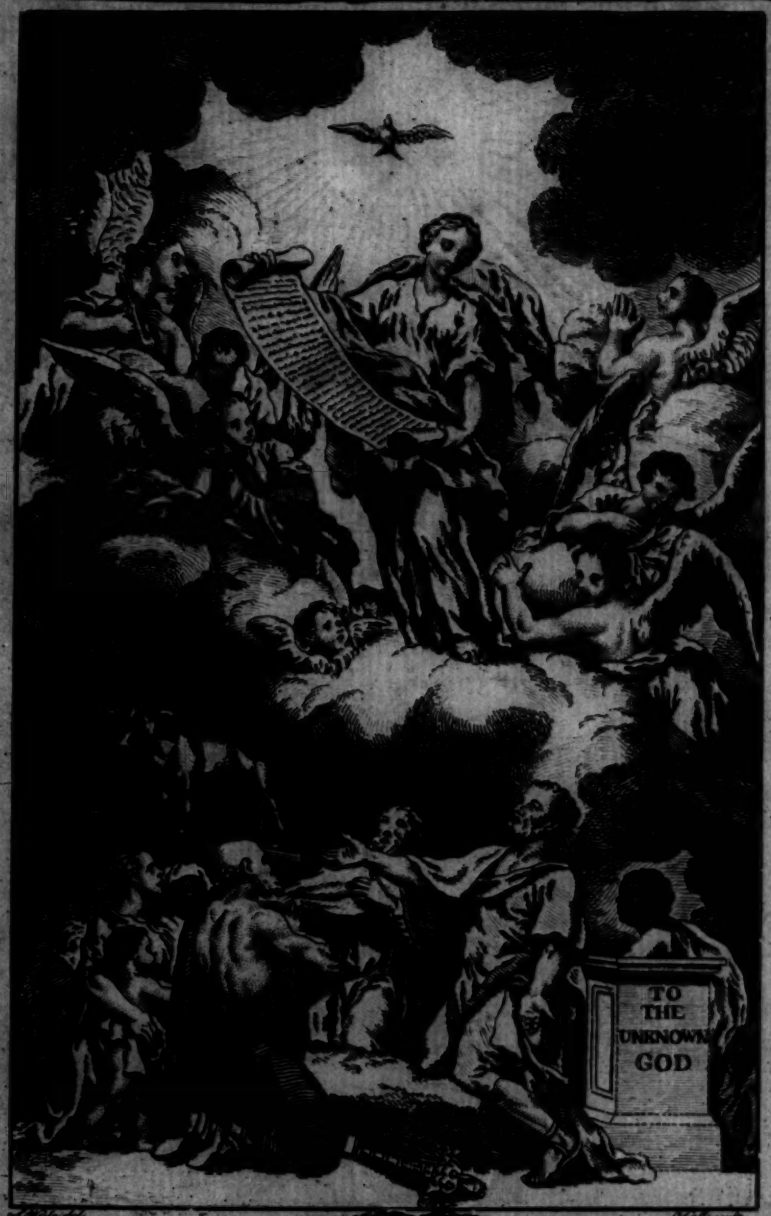
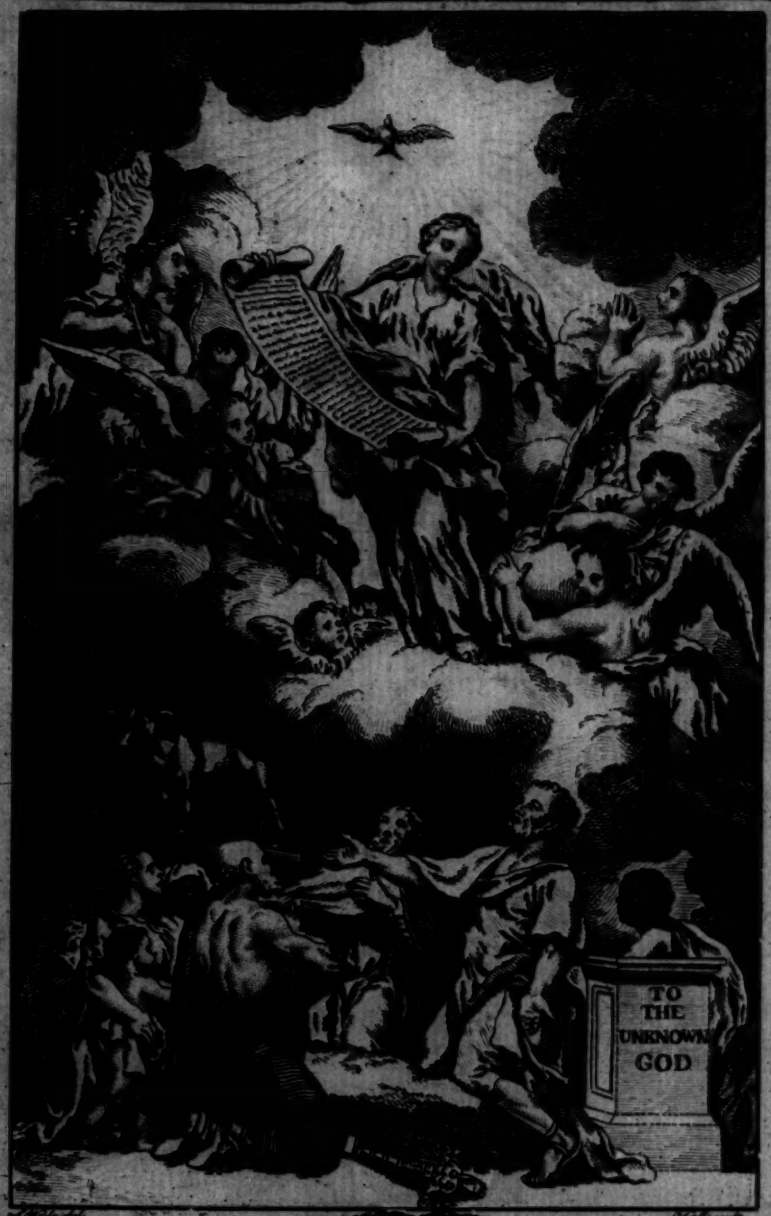


The Figure *holding an open Scroll, represents* Divine Revelation, *enlightening & dispelling the Clouds of* Ignorance *and* Idolatry. *shown by the* Altar *inscribd to the Unknown God, to denote the*

FRONTISPIECE.



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Joseph Monoux May 1847
53 Webber St London

A NEW AND COMPLETE

HISTORY

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE,

FROM THE

Creation of the World,

To the INCARNATION of our

Bleſſed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST;

CONTAINING

A clear and conciſe Account of every memorable Event, during a Period of above four thouſand Years;

PARTICULARLY,

The Creation of the World,
The Formation, and Fall of Man,
The Univerſal Deluge,
The Building of Babel,
The Call of Abraham,
The Travels of the Iſraelites,
The Nature of the Moſaic Inſtitution, and
The Predictions of the Prophets, concerning the Coming, and Offices of the MESSIAH.

TOGETHER,

With an Authentic Narrative of the Lives and Tranſactions of the moſt eminent

PATRIARCHS, PROPHETS, and other Servants of GOD,

Who were diſtinguiſhed by Divine Grace, and made inſtrumental in the Diſplay of Divine Wiſdom; ſuch as

Noah,	Joſeph,	David,	Jeremiah,
Abraham,	Moſes,	Solomon,	Ezekiel,
Iſaac,	Joſhua,	Job,	Daniel,
Jacob,	Samuel,	Iſaiah,	Jonah, &c. &c.

ILLUSTRATED

With ſuch NOTES as are eſſentially neceſſary to explain obſcure Texts, rectify former Miſ-tranſlations, and by reducing to the Standard of Truth, reconcile Paſſages which appear contrary to each other.

Sincerely deſigned to root out DEISM and INFIDELITY, and advance the Cauſe of TRUE RELIGION, by enabling Chriſtians of the loweſt Degree, as well as the moſt learned, to underſtand the Authenticity and Connection of the Old and New Teſtament, on which their Everlaſting Happineſs depends.

By the Reverend **JOHN FLEETWOOD**, D. D.

By the KING's AUTHORITY.

LONDON:

Printed for J. COOKE, at the Shakeſpear's Head, in Pater-Noſter Row.

BRITISH MUSEUM

GEORGE the Third,

By the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

To whom all theſe Preſents ſhall come, Greeting.

WHEREAS JOHN COOKE, *of Pater-noſter Row, in our City of* London, *Bookſeller, has, by his Petition humbly repreſented unto Us, that he hath been at very great Expence in the Purchaſe of Books and Manuſcripts, and in employing Our Truſty and well-beloved* JOHN FLEETWOOD, *Doctor of Divinity, to write a valuable and labourious* WORK, *intituled,*

" *A new and complete* HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE, " *from the Creation of the World to the Incarnation of our bleſſed* LORD " *and* SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. *Containing a clear and con-* " *ciſe Account of every memorable Event, during a Period of above four* " *thouſand Years.*"

Which Work he moſt humbly apprehends will tend in a very high Degree to promote the cauſe of Religion and Virtue, and to eſtabliſh in the Minds of Our Subjects a Veneration for the ſacred Oracles of Truth.

Wherefore he humbly ſolicits Our Royal Licence and Protection to himſelf, his Heirs, Executors, and Aſſigns, for the ſole Printing, Publiſhing and Vending, *the ſaid Work, for the Term of Fourteen Years, as far as may be agreeable to the Statute in that Caſe made and provided.*

We

We being willing to give all due Encouragement to this Undertaking, are graciouſly pleaſed to condeſcend to his Requeſt, and we do therefore, by theſe Preſents, as far as may be agreeable to the Statute in that Caſe made and provided, grant unto him the ſaid JOHN COOKE, *his Executors, Adminiſtrators, and Aſſigns, Our Licence for the* ſole Printing and Publiſhing *of the ſaid Work for the Term of Fourteen Years, to be computed from the Date hereof, ſtrictly forbidding all Our Subjects within our Kingdoms, or Dominions, to reprint, or abridge the ſame, either in the like or in any Size or Manner whatſoever, or to import, buy, vend, utter, or diſtribute, any Copies thereof reprinted, beyond the Seas, during the aforeſaid Term of Fourteen Years, without the Conſent or Approbation of the ſaid* JOHN COOKE, *his Executors, Adminiſtrators, and Aſſigns, under their Hands and Seals, firſt had and obtained, as they will anſwer the contrary at their Peril.*

Wherefore the Commiſſioners, and other Officers of Our Cuſtoms, the Maſter, Warden, and Company of Stationers, are to take Notice that due Obedience may be rendered to Our Pleaſure herein declared.

Given at Our Court at St. James's, *the Twenty firſt Day of* March, *One thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty nine, in the Ninth Year of Our Reign.*

By His Majeſty's Command,

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PREFACE.

THERE is a peculiar Elegance and Propriety in the Title annexed to the Sacred Writings, which are emphatically ſtiled THE BIBLE, or THE BOOK, intimating its Superiority to all other Books, and the Sublimity and Importance of the Subjects on which it treats.

The Remarks of too many Commentators, abound with critical Obſervations, while they are barren of uſeful and ſpiritual Reflections, and calculated to amuſe Curioſity rather than promote Piety. The greateſt Part of Writers, who have furniſhed us with an Hiſtorical Account of the Bible, have ſo perplexed the plain Narrative with their own ſtrange Conjectures, that the latter have confuſed the former, and thus conjoined, they have by no means anſwered the Deſign of the ſerious Reader.

The GOD of Truth, willing to acquaint ſinful Mortals with his Mind and Will, hath provided his Spirit to enlighten our Underſtanding, and his written Word to bring thoſe Things which were tranſacted many Ages paſt, and in Places far remote, to our immediate View, in order to diſplay his Omnipotence, and excite the Veneration of wondering Mortals.

The Writers of the Old and New Teſtament agreeing in one and the ſame Truth, their Teſtimony is ſo much the more enforcing, as implying ſo many ſeveral Acts of one and the ſame Spirit, producing in divers Subjects one and the ſame Effect, even the Myſtery of our Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt: For though the different Writers have their own peculiar Method and Order, in the Context of their peculiar Parts of the Hiſtory, yet there appears a perfect Agreement upon the Whole; as is evident from the cleareſt Demonſtration

ſtration of the Learned in all Ages, who have beſtowed much Labour and extraordinary Induſtry in comparing their Teſtimonies.

The Old Teſtament is itſelf a Syſtem of all kinds of Knowledge civil and religious, moral and philoſophical, and generally uſeful for the Conduct of human Life, as well as the chief Repoſitory, from which the Philoſophers and Legiſlators of all Ages, have drawn the choiceſt of their Obſervations.

The Excellency of ſacred Hiſtory will more evidently appear, if we compare it with the Accounts of the beſt and moſt ancient Heathen Writers, both Philoſophers and Hiſtorians.

How futile and trifling are the Reſearches and Diſcoveries of the Former, and the Accounts of the Latter, when compared with the glorious Diſplay of divine Wiſdom, the Triumphs of divine Grace, and the earneſt of eternal Glory contained in ſacred Writ? In this invaluable Treaſury of divine Knowledge are compriſed the whole of God's Will and Man's Duty, and the Old Teſtament, upon a diligent Search, will appear to have a moſt uniform Tendency and Deſign to be *a Schoolmaſter to bring us unto Chriſt*, as the Hiſtory therein contained, and the Facts therein related, typify and propheſy ſuch Things, as might give Mankind Aſſurance of ſuch a Saviour, and diſtinguiſh him by ſuch Marks as might infallibly convince them at his Appearance, that he was *the very Chriſt, that Prophet that ſhould come into the World*, and that we are not *to look for another*.

The Deſign of Religion being to make us wiſe for Eternity, to give us true Notions of God and ourſelves, and to point out the Path that leads to everlaſting Felicity; we cannot be too well acquainted with the ſacred Volume, on which it is founded, or too well verſed in the Hiſtory, which confirms it. To aſſiſt therefore the Chriſtian Reader in the right

Under-

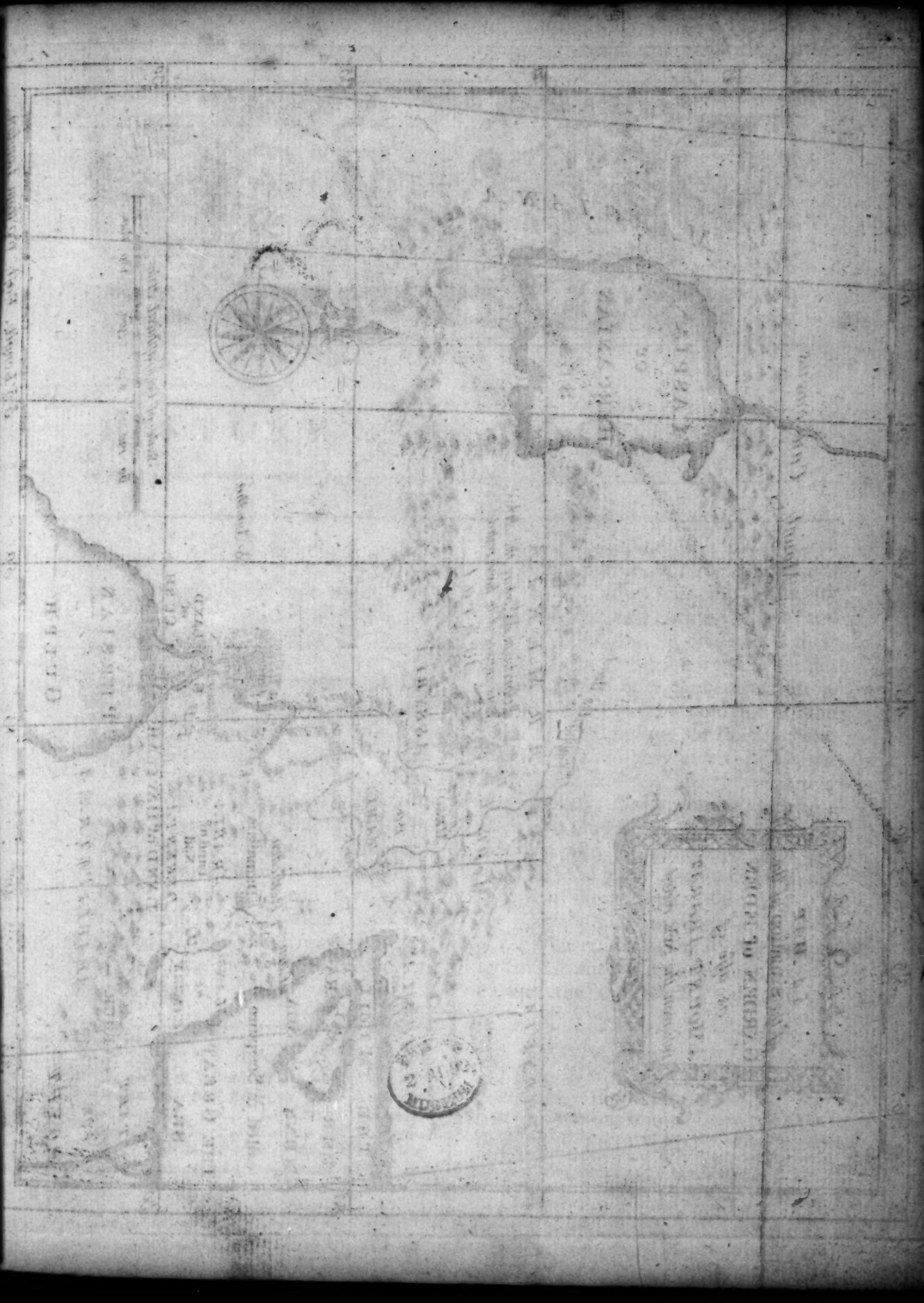
Underſtanding of thoſe Things, on, which depends his everlaſting Peace, we have taken pains to correct many Neglects in our Tranſlation of the Bible, that have furniſhed wicked Men with Excuſes, and Libertines and Atheiſts with Matter of Jeſting.——It is certain, that one of the greateſt Favours God could have conferred on Men in a State of Miſery and Ignorance, was to inform them of their Duty, and teach them the means of becoming happy: therefore there is nothing more worthy of a reaſonable Man, and eſpecially of a Chriſtian, than to apply himſelf to the Study of thoſe things, which are revealed in the Holy Scriptures, ſince they were written for this very End.

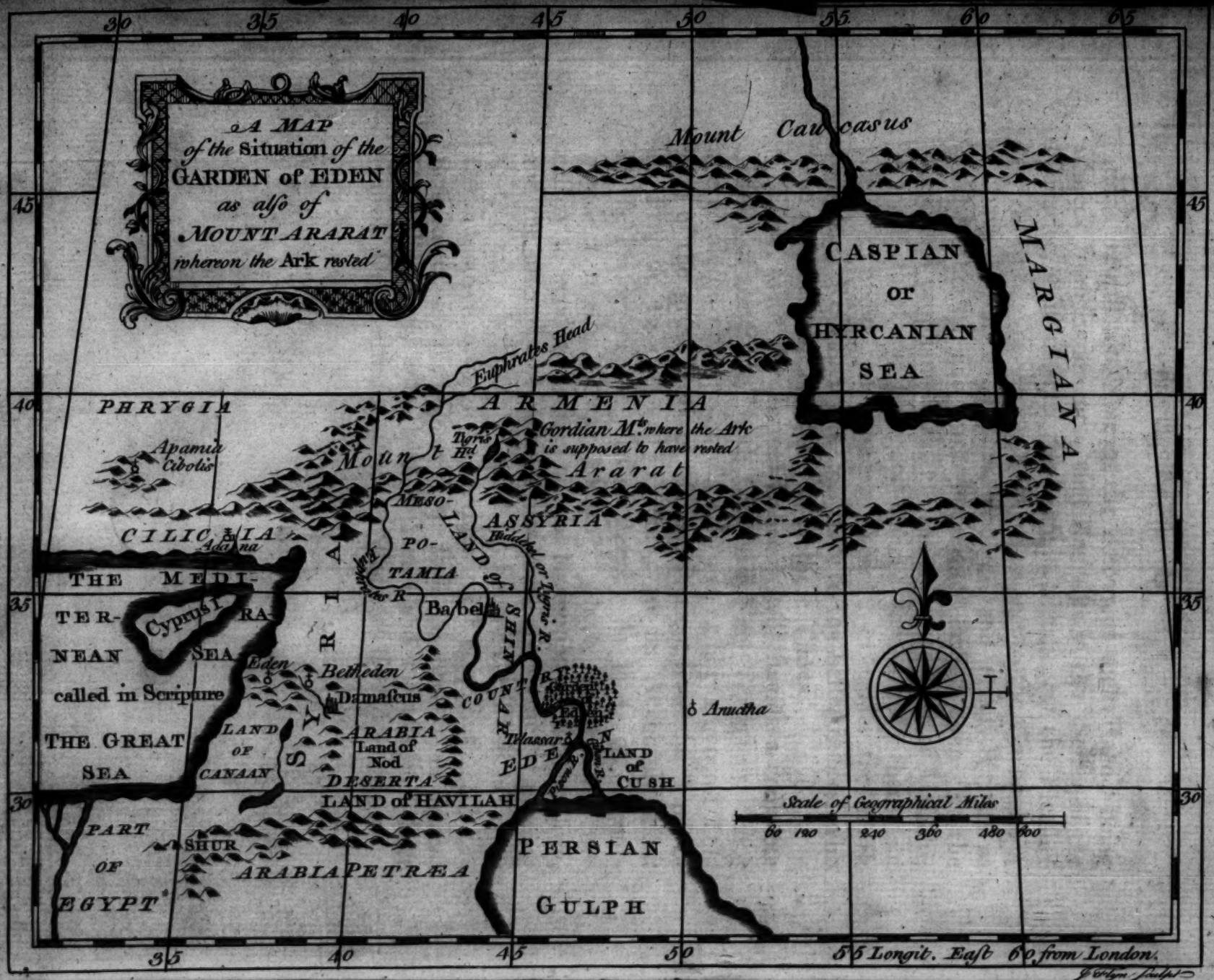
To be careleſs or negligent in a Matter of ſuch Moment is highly Criminal, and an undoubted Mark of Irreligion and Profaneneſs. Beſides, infinite Advantage may redound to the Cauſe of Truth, by making a ſingle Text plain and intelligible, and thereby overturning any of the pretended Grounds of Atheiſm and Infidelity, dangerous Error, ſuperſtitious Foppery, or ridiculous Invention: This End we preſume will be anſwered in the Courſe of our Labours, as we have conſulted the beſt Commentators, and laid down plain and eaſy Rules, whereby Perſons of the meaneſt Capacity may obſerve the moſt material Faults of all Tranſlations.

Confining ourſelves to what is Hiſtorical, we ſhall touch only upon thoſe Paſſages in the Prophets, which relate to the Hiſtory; but ſhall inſert thoſe of the *Apocrypha*, which the Jews deemed authentic, and our Church hath appointed to be read, though ſome reject them as Uncertainties. To render our Plan more eaſy and familiar, we have ranged the whole into Chapters, according as the different Subjects and Occurrences have required, and have carefully attended to the Connection of Events, in order to prove the Authenticity of the Hiſtory in general. To avoid Perplexity, the Hiſtorical Part is carried on by itſelf, and the neceſſary Remarks and Obſer-

vations are caſt into Notes at the Bottom of each Page; being aſſured, from Experience, that Remarks in the Series of the Narrative, muſt diſtract the Senſe, and take off the Pleaſure and Advantage of reading.—With reſpect to the Chronology, we have conſulted *Joſephus*, *Ruſinus*, and other Writers of good Authority, and throughout each Period connected the ſacred and prophane Hiſtory. As from the time of Malachi, to the Birth of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, there is a Chaſm of about four hundred Years; to render the Work complete, Reference has been made to the beſt Authors, who have recorded the Tranſactions of thoſe Times.

Theſe, with our former Labours will furniſh a complete Hiſtory of the Bible, both Old and New Teſtament, bring the whole into one point of View, and exhibit a general Diſplay of the great Work of Man's Salvation, from the Time of its Promiſe to our firſt Parents, to its Accompliſhment in the Perſon of the bleſſed Jeſus. As it is, we recommend it to the Divine Bleſſing, which is abſolutely neceſſary to render it uſeful to the Promotion of God's Glory, and the Intereſt and Happineſs of Mankind; earneſtly praying that it may confirm and build up ſincere Chriſtians of every Denomination amongſt us in their moſt holy Faith, till the Benefits of Divine Grace here ſhall be realized in eternal Glory hereafter, when both Believers and Infidels ſhall have ſenſible Demonſtration, that the Word of God *is true*.




A MAP
of the Situation of the
GARDEN of EDEN
as also of
MOUNT ARARAT
whereon the Ark rested
Mount Caucasus
CASPIAN
or
HYRCANIAN
SEA
MARGIANA
Euphrates Head
PHRYGIA
ARMENIA
Apamia
Cibotis
Mount
Ararat
Tigris Hd
Gordian Mt. where the Ark
is supposed to have rested
MESO-
POTAMIA
ASSYRIA
Hiddekel or Tigris R.
CILICIA
Adana
THE MEDI-
TER-
RANEAN
SEA
called in Scripture
THE GREAT
SEA
Cyprus
SYRIA
Euphrates R.
Babel
Eden
Bethéden
Damascus
LAND
OF
CANAAN
ARABIA
Land of
Nod
DESERTA
LAND of HAVILAH
SHINAR
COUNTRY
Thassar
EDEN
LAND
of
CUSH
Anuctha
PART
OF
EGYPT
SHUR
ARABIA PETRÆA
PERSIAN
GULPH
Scale of Geographical Miles
60 120 240 360 480 600
35 Longit. East 60 from London.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

The Creation of the World, and of Man. The Fall of our first Parents, and their Expulsion from Paradise.

THE first Instance of Divine Wisdom and Power known to us Mortals, was that great and stupendious Work, the *Creation* of the World. The Omnipotent Jehovah, having surveyed the unformed Earth and Water, a confused, indigested Heap, without Form, without Order, without Regularity, and overspread with Darkness; by an Almighty *Fiat* produced Light, which gave Birth to the first Day, and was succeeded by the first Night.

In the Beginning (says the inspired Penman) *God created the Heaven and the Earth*, that is, this planetary World, consisting of the Earth and other Planets, having the Sun for their Center; all of which owe their Origin to the Power of a Supreme Creator. These were not, according to the Notion of some ancient Philosophers, eternal, nor did they owe their Origin to Chance and Accident, but derive their Beauty, Order, and Regularity, from that God whose *Works are manifold*, and who *in Wisdom made them all.*

When the grand Architect set about the great Work, we are told that (a) *the Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters*, or as it is interpreted by some learned Commentators, brooded over the vast Abyss, and impreg-

(a) The Spirit of God, &c. Various are the Opinions of Commentators concerning this much controverted Passage; some think the Word RUACH, should have been translated, *Wind*, in this Place, as it admits of that Signification as well as the other; while others think by the Spirit of God may be understood the Spirit of the *Messiah*, agreeable to *Isaiah* xi. 2. *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.* We think it evident from its Production, that it was an Emanation of divine Power and Energy, which by its moving on the Chaotic Mass conveyed into it a Kind of Fermentation, and prepared it for future exertion of the same Power.

nated, as well as rendered it capable of the Diſpoſition and Order it was about to receive. The Creator pronounced his Approbation of the Work of his Hands, that, *it was good*, and diſtinguiſhed the Light from the Darkneſs, by calling the former by the Appellation of *Day*, and the latter by that of *Night*. Thus wiſely did the Almighty appoint the Day and Night conſtantly to ſucceed each other, in the ſame alternate Courſe as we now perceive them, and to form together, what we term a natural Day; *and the Evening and the Morning were the firſt Day*, that is, by the courſe, or going round of this Light, which we may ſuppoſe to have been commanded into Being about Noon, were formed an Evening and a Morning; ſo that at the enſuing Noon the Compaſs of a natural Day of Twenty-four Hours, (the firſt Day that exiſted) was fully completed.

The Work of the ſecond Day, conſiſted in laying the Foundations of the Heaven, called by the Name of (*b*) Firmament, which keeps the Waters of the Clouds, from thoſe which are upon the Earth. This done, God called all the Expanſe above this Earth, whether it be the thicker Parts that compoſe the Region of the Air, which we denominate the lower Firmament, or the thinner or more ſubtile Parts, to which we have given the Appellation of the higher Firmament, *Heaven*, which concluded the Work of the ſecond Day.

The Creation yet conſiſted of nothing but Light, the Waters and the Firmament, which divided the Waters of the Clouds from thoſe upon the Earth, that are diſtinguiſhed by the Names of Seas, Rivers, &c. On the third Day, therefore it pleaſed Almighty Power and Wiſdom, to reduce the Waters within Bounds, when he ſaid, *Let the Waters under the Heavens be gathered together unto one Place, and let the dry Land appear; and it was ſo.* The Voice of God was immediately obeyed; the Waters ſeparated themſelves from the Surface of the Earth, and on their Retreat, the dry Land appeared, which was called Earth, as was the gathering together of the Waters, Seas.

The Work of dividing the Waters being thus completed, it received the divine Approbation; but as the great Creator deſigned the Earth for the future Habitation of Man and Beaſt, being as yet barren and uncultivated, to render it fit for the intended Inhabitants, he determined to beſtow on it a prolific Virtue, and endow it with the Power of Vegetation.

In the firſt Place appeared the Graſs which covered the Earth, and was deſigned as Paſture for the Brute Creation;

(*b*) Firmament. The *Hebrew* Word, which we tranſlate *Firmament* ſignifies *Expanſe*, or *Extenſion*. This Term is applied not only to the Sky, but the Atmoſphere, and ſeems here particularly to refer to that Extent of airy Matter, or Atmoſphere, which encompaſſes the Earth: and ſeperates the Clouds from the Waters that be upon the Earth, according to the ſeventh Verſe of the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*.

Flowers

then ſucceeded (*c*) Flowers, Plants, and Trees, with all Kinds of Vegetables, in full Growth, Proportion, and Maturity. Though the firſt Fruits of the Earth were all of them produced without any Seeds, by the bare Word of God; yet to perpetuate the ſame, each Kind contained its own Seed, which being ſown in the Earth, or falling when ripe from the Plants themſelves, ſhould continue a Succeſſion to the End of the World. This likewiſe received his gracious Probate. The vegetable Tribe now covered the Earth with a green and flowery Carpet, and rendered it fit for the Reception of its Inhabitants; but the wiſe Hand of Omnipotence, further to diſplay his Power and Goodneſs, contracted the (*d*) Light which he had created the firſt Day and diffuſed throughout the Univerſe, into proper Orbs, or thoſe great Luminaries of Heaven, called Sun and Moon, one to rule the Day, and the other the Night; and to render theſe more uſeful by the Order of their Motion, he appointed them for Signs, to diſtinguiſh the Seaſons, and to divide Time, by which they have been, are, and ever will be, of ſuch eſſential Benefit to Mankind.

The Atmoſphere was now rarified, and the Bodies of the heavenly Luminaries became viſible; by their Influence on the Plants, they promoted the Offices of Vegetation, finiſhing their Revolutions in their proper Periods of Time. The Almighty Creator having employed the firſt four Days in the Creation of Things inanimate; on the fifth, he paſſed the omnipotent *Fiat* for the Production of living Creatures, ſaying, *Let the Waters bring forth abundantly, the* (*e*) *moving Creature that hath Life and* (*f*) *Fowl that may fly above the Earth in the open Firmament of Heaven.* In this Day's Work we may remark the gradual Proceedure of the Almighty, from the inanimate Creation, to Fiſh and Fowl, the leaſt perfect Species of Animals, by which the different Orders of created

(*c*) Flowers. It is not to be imagined, that the new created Earth with its abundant Fruitfulneſs, could be produced according to the ordinary Courſe of Things in the Space of Twenty-four Hours, and that without the Aſſiſtance of the Sun; but the Almighty by his omnipotent FIAT ſpoke them into Exiſtence and Perfection in an Inſtant: For he only ſpoke the Word, and they were made, he commanded and they were created. *Let the Earth bring forth Graſs, the Herb yielding Seed, and the Fruit Tree yielding Fruit after his Kind, whoſe Seed is in itſelf upon the Earth, and it was ſo*, Gen. i. 11.

(*d*) Light. Though *Moſes* repreſents the Luminaries as *made* on this Day; yet it may not be inconſiſtent to obſerve, that he could mean no more than that they were enabled to burſt from their Obſcurity and to become viſible. *Rider.*

(*e*) Moving. The Word which is here tranſlated, *Moving Creature*, ſignifies any creeping Animal, and is therefore not inapplicable to Fiſh, which though they have not Feet, lie upon their Bellies, and by the Help of their Fins, creep as it were through the Water.

(*f*) Fowl. There is a ſeeming Contradiction between this Paſſage and that in *Gen.* 2 and 19, where it is ſaid, *Out of the Ground God formed every Beaſt of the Field, and every Fowl of the Air*: But the Contradiction will vaniſh, if we conſider, that neither denies what the other affirms, though they ſpeak differently; as the Deſcription of Moſes, by no Means ſuppoſes that the Earth did not bring forth Fowl; beſides there are Birds to the preſent Day, whoſe chief Element is the Water; and many of the Learned are of Opinion that they derive their Origin

Beings are linked together, and the various ranks of Creatures make a regular Syſtem.

God likewiſe formed great (*g*) Whales or all Kinds of large Fiſh, which the Waters produce, and on a Survey of this Creation perceived that what he had made entirely anſwered the End he propoſed in their Formation. The manifold Shape of their different Bodies, the infinite Variety of their Inſtincts and Talents, but all ſo properly adapted to each particular Species, and tending to the Preſervation of the Creature poſſeſſed of them, and the Continuation of its Kind, amply declare the Wiſdom of the Creator, and prove that according to his Declaration, it is good.

God therefore gave them this Bleſſing; *Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the Waters with Fiſh, and the Earth with Fowl,* enduing them at the ſame Time with a prolific Virtue, thereby to propagate their Species, preſerve their particular Kinds, and multiply the Individuals of each; and this was the Work of the fifth Day.

Moreover it pleaſed divine Power and Goodneſs to add to the Fertillity of the Earth, and bring forth *the living Creature after his Kind, Cattle and creeping Things, and Beaſt of the Earth after his Kind,* and thus having made them complete, *He ſaw that it was good.*

The Almighty having thus rendered the World fit for the Reception, Suſtenance, and Delight of that Creature, to whom he intended to give the Rule over it, to crown this great Work, changes the commanding Expreſſion, *Let this* or *that be ſo,* into, *Let us make Man in our own* (*b*) *Image, after our Likeneſs*; a Form of Speech that repreſents the Divine Being as acting more immediately himſelf, and entering on the Maſter-Piece of Creation with a peculiar Degree of Deliberation. Deſigning the Creature he was now about to form, for the Government (under his auſpicious Providence) of this ſublunary World, he enters upon it in a ſolemn Manner, and having taken the Reſolution, declares in expreſs Terms, the Supremacy with which he determined to inveſt him; *and let him have Dominion over the Fiſh of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air, and over the Cattle, and over every creeping Thing that creepeth upon the Earth. So God created Man,* into whoſe Noſtrils, though formed of the Duſt of the Earth, he breathed the Breath of Life, and *Man became a living Soul.*

In this Manner did the Almighty form Man, and cloth him with Superiority and Honour, giving him Dominion over all the other Animals of the Creation, and enduing him with Knowledge and Power. To prove alſo that *Eve* was created on the ſame Day, though the preciſe Manner of her For-

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Origin, partly from the Water, and partly from the Earth, from whence and from their guiding their Courſe with their Tails, *Pluto* calls Fowls the Kindred of the Fiſh. *Stackhouſe.*

(*g*) Great Whales. The *Hebrew* Word ſignifies all Kind of large Fiſh, that belong to the Seas.

(*b*) Image, &c. Some of the ancient Fathers diſtinguiſh Image from Likeneſs, and think that Image refers to the Divine Nature, and Likeneſs to the Divine Virtues; but to us they ſeem to have one and the ſame Meaning; becauſe each of theſe Expreſſions are frequently put in Scripture in lieu of both, which is evident

mation, is not taken Notice of till the next Chapter; the inſpired Penman in his Account of the ſixth Day's Work, ſubjoins, *Male and Female created he them.* The Manner in which the Univerſal Parent of Nature formed our Mother *Eve* is thus related. That having already formed Man out of the Duſt of the Earth, God declares his Intention of providing him a Partner; accordingly he cauſed a deep Sleep to fall upon him, and while he ſlept, took out one of his (*i*) Ribs, cloſing up the Fleſh, made the Woman and brought her to him. *Adam* no ſooner received from the Hand of the Almighty his new formed Wife, than Self-convinced of the Obligation that aroſe therefrom to the ſtricteſt Friendſhip, the moſt cordial Love, and ſincere Affection, he exclaimed with Rapture; *This is now Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh,* and farther infers the Duties that naturally reſult from hence, as the re-union of Man and Woman; *therefore ſhall a Man leave his Father and Mother, and ſhall cleave unto his Wife, and they ſhall be one Fleſh.* Thus early was the Divine Inſtitution of Marriage, in a State of naked Innocence, when our firſt Parents had no Guilt, and conſequently no Shame.

The Almighty having thus finiſhed the laſt, but moſt perfect Parts of the Creation, and joined them together, proceeds to give them his Benediction, veſting them with the Bleſſings of Fruitfulneſs and Dominion. *Be fruitful and multiply, and repleniſh the Earth and have Dominion over it:* Thus conſtituting Man Lord over all other Creatures, and giving him the Product of the whole Earth for his Suſtenance and Pleaſure. That he might be convinced of the Efficacy of the Benediction, and the Extent of the Power, with which he was veſted; the Almighty is repreſented by the ſacred Hiſtorian, as bringing to *Adam*, every different Beaſt of the Field and Fowl of the Air, in order to fix their diſtinct Names. Accordingly *Adam* named them all, and this giving Names or Titles ſerved two Purpoſes; Firſt, to diſtinguiſh each Species from the Reſt; and ſecondly, to aſſure our firſt Parents, of the Subjection to him, in which the Almighty had placed them. Thus finiſhed on the ſixth Day, the ſtupendious Work of Creation, which when the Creator ſurveyed, he pronounced to be *very good.* On the ſeventh Day God (*k*) ended all his Works, and to impreſs Mankind with a due Senſe of his Wiſdom and Goodneſs in the Creation, and the Obligation due to him from his Creatures, he appointed that Day to be kept holy,

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dent from the next Verſe, and from *Gen.* 5 and 1. The Words Image and Likeneſs principally imply a Reſemblance of the Divine Graces, as in *Coloſſ.* xiii. 10. where we are commanded to *put on the new Man, after the Image of him that created us.*

(*i*) Rib. The Atheiſts have formed many ridiculous Queries concerning this Point, and among others demanded, whether the Rib, out of which the Woman was formed, was a ſuperfluous one. To this we ſhall only reply, that we know not the preciſe Manner in which it was done. It is ſufficient for us, the Woman was formed out of the Subſtance of the Man's Body, and that ſuch a Method of forming her, was more agreeable than any other to God's Order and Wiſdom.

(*k*) Ended. The Original Word ſignifies *had ended*, and if ſo rendered, would obviate the Objection, which may be drawn from the ſeeming

All Things being then completely formed; to ſhew his peculiar Favour towards Man, God placed him with his Female Partner, in a moſt beautiful Spot of Ground called (*l*) *Eden*, in order to cultivate and keep it, allowing him the free Uſe of every Herb, Fruit, and Flower around him, excepting one which is called by the ſacred Hiſtorian, the (*m*) Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; nay, permitted him to eat of the Tree of (*n*) Life, to encourage and excite him to Fidelity and Obedience to his Maker; while on the other Hand, he annexes a dreadful Penalty to the Violation of the ſacred Injunction; *In the Day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely* (*o*) *die.* Thus fixed in the moſt beauteous Situation, poſſeſſed of Innocence, devoid of Guilt, and free from Care, the Happineſs of our firſt Parents ſeems complete; but alas! Their Bliſs was tranſient, their Innocence fleeting, and their Exemption from Care comparatively ſhort: Satan the Arch-fiend having reſolved to tamper with them, and make an Effort to ſeduce them from their Obedience to their Creator, and involve them together with himſelf, in the Ruins of Apoſtacy. In order to accompliſh this accurſed Deſign, by Means of the (*p*) Serpent, as an Inſtrument; he attacks the Wo-

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Contradiction between this Paſſage and that which immediatly follows, as it would then ſhew, that as on the ſeventh Day, there remained nothing to be done, [a Tranſlation that the greateſt *Hebrew* Maſters will allow,] therefore God reſted, not from Fatigue, but voluntarily ceaſed from creating.

(*l*) The Word Eden in the Hebrew ſignifies Pleaſure, and indicates the Beauty of the Place in which their munificent Creator placed our firſt Parents. It is the general Opinion of Divines and Philoſophers, that the bliſsful Spot was about Meſopotamia, that Country being not far diſtant from Judea. There is a Tradition of the Fathers, that when Adam was expelled from Paradiſe, he came at laſt to Judea, died there, and was buried on a Mount, which his Poſterity, becauſe the Head of the firſt Man was laid there, called, MOUNT CALVARY, where the great Redeemer was crucified, for the Expiation of the Sin of Adam, the firſt and original Tranſgreſſor. This Opinion is atteſted by the moſt authentic of the Fathers.

(*m*) Tree of Knowledge, &c. There are various Opinions, concerning the Nature and Properties of this Tree, which was forbidden to our firſt Parents: ſome think that it had a baneful Quality, directly oppoſite to that of the Tree of Life, while others imagine that it is thus called by the Hiſtorian, becauſe after Adam and Eve had eaten of it, they became ſenſible of the Good they had loſt, and the Evil they had incurred, by their Diſobedience.

(*n*) Tree of Life, &c. The ancient Fathers think this Tree was ſo called, from its Virtue to repair the animal Spirits, till Man ſhould be tranſlated from a corporeal Life, to a Life ſpiritual and immortal: This Opinion is ſupported by Moſes, who tells us, Geneſis the 3d and 22d. "That had Man, even after the Fall, eaten of the Tree of Life, he would have lived forever."

(*o*) Not immediately ceaſe to live, but be liable to Mortality, with all its attendant Frailties, and Miſeries.

(*p*) Serpent. It is here obſervable, that *Moſes* in his Account of the Fall, mentions not the Agent, the Devil, but only the Inſtrument of the Agent, the Serpent. This is the opinion of the beſt Commentators, who alledge, that the Devil actually made Uſe of the Serpent, to talk to *Eve* and to tempt her. That it was a real Serpent, and not an imaginary one, that ſpoke to her; but it only ſpoke by Means of the Devil, who uſed that Creature as fitteſt to be employed in that Service.

And

man, through whom he thought afterwards to prevail with the Man. He begins his vile Inſinuation with a Queſtion; *Yea hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?* In order to learn from thence, the Certainty of the Divine Injunction. The Woman had no ſooner related the poſitive Command of God, that they were allowed, to *eat of the Fruit of the Trees of the Garden*, but that on Pain of Death they were forbidden to eat of the Fruit of *the Tree, which is in the midſt of the Garden*; than that Father of Lies, in Contradiction to the Divine Decree of the God of Truth, told her, ſhe ſhould *not ſurely die*; and farther, to gain upon her Deſire already inflamed, added, that the Reaſon of it being forbidden, was, that by eating of it, they would enoble their Nature, and become as Gods themſelves. The infernal Project ſucceeded; the Woman had long viewed the Fruit with great Deſire, till at Length the Beauty of its Colour, and its miraculous Power ſo inflamed her Paſſions, that ſhe ventured to pluck the Fruit, and eat her own Death; forgetting the expreſs Command of her Maker, and unawed by the dreadful Menaces denounced againſt Diſobedience. Not content with the Ruin of herſelf, ſhe offers the fatal Fruit to her Husband, who received it from her, and involved himſelf in the common Mortality.

Their Eyes were now opened indeed; but what to behold? The moſt aggravated folly: monſtrous Impiety! What to diſcover? their Shame, and the Fall and Diſgrace of their Nature. Conſcious Guilt ſtared them in the Face, and they were reduced to the poor Subterfuge of concealing their Nakedneſs; whereas in a State of Innocence, like Children, they were naked and were not aſhamed. When our firſt Parents continued in that bliſsful State, they no ſooner heard the Voice of the Lord approaching them, than they ran to meet him, and with humble Joy welcomed his gracious Viſits; but now their Maker was become their Terror, their Conſciences painted their Tranſgreſſion in the blackeſt Light, all Hope was baniſhed, and nothing remained but Horror and Deſpair. Now therefore, when they heard *the Voice of the Lord walking in the Garden*, calling *Adam, where art thou*? [not by Way of receiving Information, but to render him more ſenſible of his Tranſgreſſion of the Divine Command;] Fear came upon them, and they hid themſelves; the Man anſwering with the utmoſt Confuſion, *I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid becauſe I was naked, and I hid myſelf.* Confeſſing his Nakedneſs, he confeſſed his Guilt, of which his omniſcient Creator immediately convicted him, and knowing he could alone obtain the Knowledge of the ſame by eating the forbidden Fruit, demanded of him the Means by which he came to know that he was naked. Though *Adam* ſought not to deny, he attempted to palliate his Crime, and transfer the Guilt upon his Wife as the Cauſe of the ſame; *The Woman, whom thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.* When God remonſtrated with her upon her crimi-

nal Behaviour, ſhe endeavoured to lay it upon the Serpent. *The Serpent beguiled me and I did eat.* The fallen Pair having thus confeſſed their Tranſgreſſion, the Almighty immediately paſſed Sentence upon the Serpent, as the Inſtrument employed by the great Enemy of Mankind, to ſeduce them to the horrid Commiſſion of a moſt diſingenuous Crime; and to give Poſterrity a ſenſe of the heinous Nature of ſinning againſt God, as well as thus early make known his gracious Deſign of raiſing up a Saviour from the Seed of the Woman, who ſhould bring Redemption to Iſrael, and vanquiſh the Kingdom of Sin and Death. *Becauſe thou haſt done this, thou art curſed above all Cattle, and above every Beaſt of the Field, upon thy Belly ſhalt thou go, and Duſt ſhalt thou eat all the Days of thy Life. (q) And I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between her Seed, and thy Seed, it ſhall bruiſe thy Head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his Heel.*

Nor did the Woman paſs without awful Tokens of the divine Diſpleaſure; but was ſolemnly given to underſtand, that ſhe entailed upon herſelf Sorrow from Conception, Pain in Childbirth, and Subjection to her Huſband. *I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow and thy Conception, in Sorrow ſhall thou bring forth Children, and thy Deſire ſhall be to thy Huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

The Puniſhment of Adam conſiſted in a Life of perpetual Toil and Slavery, in Order to keep in due Subjection, thoſe Paſſions and Appetites, to gratify which he had tranſgreſſed the divine Command. *Becauſe thou haſt hearkened unto the Voice of thy Wife, and haſt eaten of the Tree of which I commanded thee, ſaying thou ſhalt not eat of it; curſed is the Ground for thy Sake, in Sorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the Days of thy Life: Thorns alſo and Thiſtles ſhall it bring forth to thee; and thou ſhall eat the Herb of the Field: In the Sweat of thy Face thou ſhalt eat Bread, till thou return unto the Ground; for out of Duſt waſt thou taken, and to Duſt ſhall thou return.*

Having thus ſolemnly pronounced the awful Decree, both on the Cauſe of the Offence, and the Offenders themſelves; God to enhance their Senſe of the Crime, and the Tokens of his Reſentment, expelled them from the bliſsful Regions of Paradiſe, and Man was conſigned to Toil and Labour; and to preſerve the forbidden Fruit ſacred from the unhallowed Hands of the corrupted Race of Mankind, (r) *Cherubims* were placed at

(q) And I will put Enmity, &c. That is, there ſhall ſubſiſt an irreconcileable Hatred, between the human and diabolical Race; becauſe at the Inſtigation of the latter, the former had incurred the Penalty of Death and the Train of Miſeries, which Mortality entails. But the Seed of the Woman, Jeſus the mighty Saviour and Redeemer of his People, ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head, by making Atonement to divine Juſtice for Adam's Tranſgreſſion, deſtroying the Powers of Darkneſs, and obtaining eternal Redemption for all who believe in him.

(r) Cherubims, or Angels, whoſe Refulgence reſemble the Vibrations of a flaming Sword. They may alſo be conſidered as whatever tends to ſtrike Fear and Terror.

the eaſt End of the Garden. Thus fell our firſt Parents and thereby loſt their original Rectitude, introduced moral Evil, and entailed Sin, with all its dreadful Concomitants upon their Poſterity, who from that Moment to the preſent have felt the dire Effects of the Fall; though bleſſed be God, their State is not deſperate, but capable of being repaired by the Blood of the ſecond Adam, the Lord from Heaven.

CHAP. II.

The Murder of Abel. The Conſtruction of the Ark. Noah's Entry. The univerſal Deluge. Exit of Noah and his Family out of the Ark. The Wickedneſs of Cham.

THE fatal Effects of the Fall ſoon appeared after the Expulſion of our firſt Parents from the bliſsful Manſions of *Eden*. The human Race was increaſed by the Birth of two Sons to *Eve*, (*s*) *Cain* and *Abel*, the latter of whom fell a Victim to the Envy and Revenge of his Brother. When theſe two Brothers grew up to Years of Maturity, they followed different Employments: *Cain* betook him to Tillage, but (*t*) *Abel* embarked in the paſtoral Life, being a Keeper of Sheep.

It happened in proceſs of Time that each brought their offering to the Lord, according to the different Occupations that they followed; *Cain*'s being of the Fruits of the Ground, and *Abel*'s that of the Firſtlings of his Flock, with the fat thereof. The Lord, for cauſes then beſt known to himſelf, accepted *Abel*'s offering, but rejected that of *Cain*, who incenſed on that Account, diſcovers Envy in his Countenance, and was therefore reprimanded by God, who intimated that the Cauſe of the Rejection of his Offering, proceeded from his want of Sincerity, aſſuring him, that if for the Future, he acted with Integrity, he ſhould be accepted, otherwiſe he ſhould be treated as a Delinquent and Hypocrite. But this Reprimand of his Maker had no Effect upon *Cain*, who retained his Envy and Reſentment againſt his innocent Brother, and took the firſt Opportunity to ſlay him.

Thus prevailed the inordinate Paſſions, and produced the firſt Murder, on no other Ground than Rancour and Malice, at the juſt Dealing of an upright God, who preferred the offering of *Abel*, becauſe it was preſented with a Heart more ſincere, grateful, and humble, than that of *Cain*. The Almighty, as he called for his Father *Adam* after his firſt Tranſgreſſion, in like Manner, demands of *Cain* where he was, not, as before obſerved, for In-

(*s*) Cain. At it is mentioned by the ſacred Hiſtorian, that *Eve* on the Birth of *Cain*, exulted and ſaid, I have gotten a Man from the Lord, and as the Term KANA, ſignifies Poſſeſſion, ſome have been inclined to think, that Eve was perſuaded that this Son was the promiſed Seed, which was to break the Serpent's Head; but if that was the Caſe, time ſoon evinced her Diſappointment.

(*t*) The Word *Abel*, ſignifies Vanity, either as it preſaged the Suddenneſs of his Death, or that it denoted the Vanity of Mortality, to which all were now liable.

ſormation, but to ſtrike him with Guilt and Shame: the Criminal not only lied unto his Maker, but inſolently aſked, as if diſpleaſed with the Queſtion, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* But this attempt to evade Confeſſion availed not, for the Lord not only charged him with the Murder of his Brother; but convicted him of the ſame. *What haſt thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground. And now art thou curſed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand. When thou tilleſt the Ground, it ſhall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength. A Fugitive and a Vagabond ſhall thou be in the Earth.*

Cain, ſtruck with the Severity of this Denunciation, convinced of the atrocious Nature of his Crime, and deploring the Miſery of his Situation, exclaimed (*u*) *My Puniſhment is greater than I can bear!* Nevertheleſs, he retained his rancorous and diſobedient Temper, and ſeems to have been much leſs concerned for his Sin, than his Puniſhment. *Behold*, ſaid he, *thou haſt driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth, and from thy Face ſhall I be hid; and I ſhall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond upon the Earth; and it ſhall come to paſs that every one that findeth me ſhall ſlay me.* But the Almighty reſerving to himſelf the ſole right of puniſhing Cain for this Crime, and at the ſame time deſirous of exciting in Poſterity, proper Apprehenſions of Murder, ſecured him again the Dread of being himſelf ſlain, declaring that he would avenge his Death ſeven fold; thereby intimating as hereafter declared in ſacred Writ, *Vengeance is mine, ſaith the Lord*: that is, it is not lawful for private Perſons of their own Authority to kill ſuch as deſerve Death. To give him Aſſurance of his Promiſe, God ſet a (*w*) Sign or Wonder before him, leſt any finding him, ſhould kill him, of which he was in Danger, becauſe the world being now near 130 Years old, it abounded with People deſcended from the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*. After this *Cain* departed from the Preſence of the Lord, and took up his Abode in the Land of *Nod*, to the Eaſtward of *Eden*, beyond the Country of Babylon, where he took a Wife, who bare him a Son called *Enoch*, after whom he named a City that he built in thoſe Parts. From the Loins of *Cain* in regular Succeſſion was produced *Jabel*, who taught Men to pitch Tents, which were requiſite for their Subſiſtence and that of their Cattle, before Agriculture was reduced to an Art; for though Men fed Cattle before, by the Invention of Tents, he taught them how to remove to more

(*u*) My Puniſhment, &c. In moſt of the Verſions, this Paſſage is rendered, My Offence is too great to obtain Pardon; but the Septuagint confirms the firſt Senſe.

(*w*) There are divers vague Conjectures, and abſurd Notions concerning the Mark that God ſet upon Cain, but they all ſerve rather to perplex, than clear up the Paſſage; it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the Text ſhould be rendered, *that God appointed to Cain a Sign or Token*, to aſſure him that none ſhould kill him, according to the *Septuagint*.

Sons

fertile and freſh Spots, after thoſe which had been grazed on, were no longer fit for Subſiſtance.

Jubal the Brother of *Jabal* firſt invented muſical Inſtruments, *Tubal-Cain* was alſo deſcended from the ſame Stock, being the Son of *Lamech* by his Wife *Zillah*, and was the firſt Artificer in Braſs, Iron, and other Metals. This is the Moſaic Account of *Cain's* Deſcendants, which ſeems to have been recorded in order to inform Poſterity who firſt invented certain Arts, and were afterwards infamous from their wicked Practices. Our firſt Parent having been deprived of his Son *Abel*, by the Malice and Barbarity of his Brother *Cain*, God was pleaſed to raiſe him up another Son, whom he called, *Seth*, or *appointed*.

From *Seth*, ſprang *Enos*, in whoſe Days the ſacred Hiſtorian informs us, that Men began to inſtitute ſtated Forms and Ceremonies in the Worſhip of Almighty God.

Moſes, from this *Seth*, continues the Line of *Adam* to ten Generations before the Flood, with the Ages of thoſe long-lived Antediluvians. Of all the Poſterity of *Adam* the moſt remarkable is *Enoch*, who for his eminent Piety and Virtue was exempted from Mortality, being immediately, that is, without paſſing thro' the valley of the Shadow of Death, tranſlated to the Realms of Bliſs. Pious *Enoch* left behind him his Son *Methuſalah*, whoſe long Life rendered him eminent in the Liſt of Patriarchs. From *Methuſalah*, ſprang *Lamech* the Father of *Noah*, at whoſe Birth it is remarkable that his Father preſaged the extraordinary Favours which God ſhould beſtow upon him; *This ſame ſhall comfort us concerning our Work and Toil of our Hands, becauſe of the ground which the Lord hath curſed.* His Prediction was indeed true; but not exact in point of Circumſtance; for *Noah* was inſtrumental in being the Reſtorer of the deſolated World, delivering the Church, and preſerving it from periſhing.

If we conſider the prodigious Length of Men's Lives in this Age, the Strength of their Conſtitution from a temperate Life, and the advanced Years in which they beget Children, the Number of Inhabitants before the Flood will appear to be very numerous. Hence it came to paſs that the Families of *Cain* and *Seth*, began to enter into Nuptial Alliances; for tho' for a long Time the Poſterity of *Seth* ſhunned Converſe with the Offſpring of *Cain* on account of their cruel Diſpoſition; yet when the World grew very Populous, the (*x*) Sons of the Righteous ſhook off their former Reſerve, and entertained a criminal Deſire for the Offſpring of *Cain*, called by *Moſes*, *the Daughters*

(*x*) Sons of God. Commentators in general underſtand by the Term, *Sons of God*, the Children of *Seth*, who are diſtinguiſhed thereby from the Daughters of *Men*, the Children of *Cain*, who were as remarkable for their wickedneſs as the other Family had been for their Piety and Zeal for the Worſhip of the true God. Upon the whole, the Deſign of the Hiſtorian, is evidently to ſhew, that the Children of *Seth* contracted an Alliance with the Daughters of *Cain*, and joined in the univerſal Corruption of Mankind.

of Men. This Deſire being indulged, in courſe of Time prevailed on the Sons of God, or Family of *Seth*, to take Wives, as meerly gratified their laſcivious Fancy; which ſhews that tho' they were the Offspring of the Righteous, they were greatly degenerated from their Piety and ſtrict Obedience to the Divine Laws; for it is very obſervable, that immediately after this Alliance, the Almighty complains of the univerſal Depravity of Mankind, the Children of the Righteous having been infected by the Practices of the Wicked, and too far involved with them in a ſinful Gratification of their Luſts and Paſſions. Nay ſo aggravated was their Wickedneſs, ſo heinous their Sin, that the Lord is ſaid to have repented, *that he had made Man upon Earth*, and to have determined to cut him off. But the piety of righteous *Noah* obtained Grace and Favour in the Eyes of his God, who was graciouſly pleaſed to reſerve him and his Family conſiſting of eight Perſons, as eternal Monuments of his Goodneſs, and ſtanding Tokens of his everlaſting Love to his Church and People.

The Almighty Parent of the Univerſe, who is merciful in all his Ways, though Men are corrupt and abominable, gave a ſignal Proof of his Forbearance, in allowing Mankind an hundred and twenty Years to repent; nay to magnify the Riches of his Goodneſs, when that Term was almoſt expired he gave then a ſecond Warning; being yet unwilling to deſtroy them.

But at length, when the Lord ſaw that Mankind were ſo univerſally corrupted, that they deſpiſed his Forbearance, and perſiſted in their Wickedneſs in ſpite of all that could be done to reclaim them; he made known to his ſervant *Noah*, his awful Determination, to involve them, and the Earth they inhabited, in one general Deſtruction, by a Flood of Water. According therefore to his gracious Deſign towards *Noah* and his Family, whom in his wiſe Providence he had appointed to repleniſh the depopulated World; God warned him to make an (*y*) Ark, or large Veſſel, to contain his Family and ſome of all Creatures; for ſeven Days hence, (ſays he) "I will cauſe it to rain forty Days and Forty Nights upon the Earth;" in which time if they had repented, and turned unto the Lord their God, to his Service and Worſhip, there is good Ground to believe their Doom would have been reverſed, even as *Nineveh* was ſaved by the turning of its Inhabitants to the Lord, at the Preaching of his Servant *Jonah*.

In obedience to the divine Command, *Noah* ſet about the arduous Work, which he finiſhed preciſely according to God's Direction, before the Rain began to fall; having been greatly encouraged, by an Aſſurance from his Maker, that tho' he deſtroyed all Fleſh, he would eſtabliſh his Covenant with him.

(*y*) Ark. The Ark was ſuppoſed to be a broad, flat bottomed Veſſel, reſembling a Cheſt; the Words tranſlate *Gopher Wood*, is variouſly rendered; by ſome *plained-boards*, by ſome tetragonal Planks, by others Cedar-wood, Box, and Cypreſs-wood.

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NOAH *entering the* ARK. Gen. 7. V 7.

The Form and Dimenſions of this Ark are beſt deſcribed by the ſacred Hiſtorian; *And this is the Faſhion in which thou ſhalt make it of; the Length of the Ark ſhall be three hundred* (z) *Cubits, the Breadth of it fifty Cubits, and the Height of it thirty Cubits. A window ſhalt thou make to the Ark, and in a Cubit ſhalt thou finiſh it above, and the Door of the Ark, ſhalt thou ſet in the Side thereof, with lower, ſecond, and third Stories ſhalt thou make it.*

The neceſſary Preparations being thus made, God commanded *Noah* and his Family to come into the Ark, and to take in with him every living Creature; but with Diſtinction in reſpect to their Quality. Of *clean* Beaſts, he was to take them in by Sevens, the Male and his Female, that is three pair of each and the ſeventh for Sacrifice; but of *unclean* only by two, the Male and his Female.

Theſe Creatures, as it were, by Inſtinct came to *Noah*, who placed them according to their Size and Nature in the Ark, having already provided for their Subſiſtance. Having thus obeyed the Divine Direction, the pious Patriarch entered the Ark with his Family; in the ſix hundreth Year of his Age, and on (*a*) the ſeventeenth Day of the ſecond Month; the Face of things began to wear a gloomy Aſpect, and threaten ſome dreadful Judgment. The Windows or Cataracts of Heaven were opened, and the Earth was overſpread with dreadful Inundation. In vain did ſinful Mortals ſeek for Shelter, or endeavour by climbing to ſhelter themſelves from the common Ruin, for Mountains and Vallies were ſoon alike, and every Refuge was baniſhed their Sight. Forty Days and Nights did it rain without Intermiſſion, when the Ark began to float, and was lifted up above the Earth. A Diſmal Scene now appeared; the Earth with all its beautiful Variety of Nature and Art was no more; nothing remained but a watery Deſart abounding with Wrecks of Men and Things, all of which (the Inhabitants of the Ark excepted) were overwhelmed in the dreadful Inundation. The Almighty having thus avenged himſelf of a ſinful World, began now to entertain benevolent Thoughts towards his reſerved Inhabitants of the Ark; and mindful of the Covenant he made with his Servant *Noah*, cauſed a Wind to blow, which drove back the Waters, and left the Earth dry.

The firſt Token which *Noah* diſcovered of the Ceſſation of the Flood, was the reſting of the Ark upon the Mountains of (*b*) ARARAT. This was about the beginning of *October*, and about the Middle of *December* following, the Tops of the Mountains appeared. The ſmalleſt Appearance of any thing ſubſtantial was a pleaſing

(z) The Standard Cubit of the *Jews* was equal to twenty-two of our Inches, conſequently the Ark was five hundred and forty ſeven Feet long; ninety one Feet broad, and fifty four Feet high: ſo that is was wiſely adapted to its Deſign, which was to ſave a Remnant of all Creatures on the Face of the Earth.

(*a*) The Seventeenth Day of the ſecond Month: that is about the beginning of May.

(*b*) *Ararat.* There are various Opinions concerning the Situation of Mount *Ararat*; but the moſt general as well as agreeable to Reaſon, is that it was near the Middle of *Armenia*.

Some

Proſpect to *Noah*, who had been confined a whole Year (for ſo long the Waters continued over the Earth) and beheld nothing around him but Water; but at the ſame Time wiſely thinking, that tho' the Tops of the Mountains were viſible, the Vallies were even then overflowed, he patiently waited forty Days longer; when opening the window of the Ark he let fly a Raven, in order to learn whether the Waters were dried. Encouraged by the Abſence of the Raven ſeven Days; he let fly a Dove, which finding no reſting place, returned to its old Habitation. Seven Days afterwards, the Patriarch ſent out the ſame Bird, which returned with an Olive-branch, a happy Certainty that the Waters were removed from the Place, where the Olive Tree ſtood.

Still determined not to be too haſty, he remained in the Ark ſeven Days more, and then ſent out the Dove a third Time; and as ſhe did not return, he prepared for his Exit out of the Ark. Nevertheleſs, though he made the neceſſary Preparations, mindful of God's Direction, he ventured not forth, till fifty five Days afterwards, in order that the Earth might be dry for his Reception.

Accordingly, he went out of the Ark, on God's poſitive Command, on the twenty ſeventh Day of the ſecond Month; ſo that as before obſerved, there was an exact Solar Year, from the Time in which the Rain began to deſcend, to that in which *Noah* and his Family came out of the Ark, with all the living Creatures he had taken into it. This was about the beginning of the Month of *May*, when Nature appears in her Bloom and Verdure, and there was Abundance of Paſture for the Refreſhment of the Creatures, that had been ſo long confined in the Ark, as well as afforded all that could contribute to the Uſe and Delight of the Sons of Men. *Noah*, had no ſooner ſet his Foot on dry Land, than he erected an Altar unto the God of his Salvation, as a Token of his Gratitude for the mighty Deliverance he had wrought for him and his Family, whom he had reſerved for repleniſhing the depopulated World.

The Incenſe offered by the pious Patriarch, came up to the Lord with a ſweet ſmelling Savour, from the purity of his Intention; and God was pleaſed to ſignify his Approbation, not only by eſtabliſhing his former Covenant with *Noah* (and in him with his Poſterity) but graciouſly aſſuring him, that he would no more curſe the Ground for Man's Sake, (*c*) for the Imagination of his Heart was Evil from

(*c*) Some Commentators think that *for* ſhould be rendered *though*, as ſuch Tranſlation makes God approve of evil Actions: but we cannot diſcern the Propriety of this Remark; for as the Almighty in his Wiſdom might be ſuppoſed to perceive that Mankind would ever retain the Infection of the Fall; he might be ſuppoſed to reaſon thus; as Experience proves that Man from his Youth is prone to Evil, as Sin is interwoven with his Nature; I will not any more thus puniſh Sin, but ſuffer the Order of things to continue, reſerving their Puniſhment for a future State.

Rainbow.

Noah's Sacrifice, Gen.ˢ VIII. 20.

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his Youth, nor extirpate the whole Race of Creatures any more.

Having thus wonderfully reſtored the Order of Things, to its former State; the Bleſſing pronounced unto *Noah*, and his Poſterity, is renewed by the Bequeſt of univerſal Poſſeſſion and Dominion of the new Earth; the Flood was the Forfeiture and Penalty for Non-allegiance; whereas by this Renewal of Leaſe or Tenure, the Curſe on Man's old Territory was fully accompliſhed, and Man made a free Tenant again, the Almighty reſerving to himſelf the conditional Clauſe of Service and Obedience, from the Date of the Flood.

Accordingly God pronounced his Bleſſing upon *Noah* and his Children, commanded them to multiply, and fill the Earth; and whereas they had formerly taken no other Food than Vegetables, they were now, after the Flood, permitted to eat Fleſh, but particularly injoined to abſtain from the Blood, and Fleſh ſtrangled, from which the Blood had not been drawn; leſt the human Race, like the Beſtial, ſhould eat Creatures alive; that is, the Blood as well as the Fleſh. But tho' the ſupreme Governor of the Univerſe, permitted them to kill Animals, for their Food and Suſtenance, he moſt ſolemnly forbid them to ſhed the Blood of Man; declaring that ſhedding human Blood, ſhould be retaliated by the ſame; *Who ſo ſheddeth Man's Blood, by Man ſhall his Blood be ſhed.* God then proceeded to ratify the Covenant he had made with *Noah* not to deſtroy the World and its Inhabitants any more by Water; and to give him Aſſurance of the Promiſe, placed the *(d)* Rainbow as a Token in the Cloud, *I ſet my Bow in the Cloud*, a Bow unſtringed, a Bow hanging in the Cloud, an Emblem of the divine Favour, that he would not ſuddenly ſhoot forth the Arrows of implacable Wrath, though provoked in the higheſt Degree. Though the *old* World was deſtroyed for the Wickedneſs of its Inhabitants, and the *new* World might be expected to have been filled with People of a better Diſpoſition; as in the Ark there were unclean as well as clean Beaſts; ſo in the Family of righteous *Noah*, there was a wicked *Cham*, as well as a pious *Shem* and *Japheth*.

Accordingly there was one of the three Sons of *Noah*, who were preſerved in the Ark to people the unhabited World, that by his Wickedneſs not only brought upon himſelf the Curſe of his Father, but the Vengeance of the Almighty; and inſtead of propagating a Race of pious Children, was Father of an untoward Generation that felt the ſevereſt Strokes of divine Wrath.

This aroſe from the firſt palpable Token of human Degeneracy after the Deluge. *Noah*, having received the

(d) Rainbow. The Jews, ſaith a learned Writer, when they ſee the Rainbow bleſs God for being mindful of his Covenant, and faithful in his Promiſe; but it is to be obſerved, that this Covenant was not made only between him and their Nation, but with all the Inhabitants of the World, that God would no more drown it in an univerſal Deluge.

Canaan

Eſtabliſhment of God's Covenant, and a Command to multiply and repleniſh the Earth, aſſiduouſly applied himſelf to Agriculture, and in the Courſe of his Labours planted a Vineyard. Naturally deſirous of taſting the Fruit of his Labour, and unapprized of the intoxicating Quality of the Juice, he drank too freely, through the Heat of the Weather, and being overcome thereby lay'd down to ſleep in his Tent, where by the ruffling of the Wind, or the Diſcompoſure of his Body, he was uncovered in that Part, which Nature teaches us to conceal.

In this Poſture he was firſt diſcovered by *Cham*, who inſtead of covering his Father's Nackedneſs and concealing his Shame, expoſed his Weakneſs and ridiculed his Situation. But his Brothers, endued with filial Piety, and moved at the profligate Behaviour of *Cham*, and the indecent poſture of their aged Parent, went and fetched a Garment, and looking the contrary Way, to avoid the diſguſting Sight, covered his Nakedneſs. When *Noah* recovered from the Stupefaction, into which the Wine had thrown him, and was informed of his younger Son's flagrant Neglect of Duty: he uttered a Curſe implying that *Cham*'s Violation of filial Duty would be retaliated upon him, in the wretchedneſs and Degeneracy of his Children, particularly the Race of Cain; *Curſed be* (*e*) Canaan, *a Servant of Servants ſhall he be to his Brethren.* With equal Warmth did he applaud and bleſs the pious Behaviour of his Son *Shem and Japheth* (*f*) *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Shem, God ſhall enlarge Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem, and Canaan, ſhall be his Servant.*

Good old *Noah* lived after the Flood three hundred and fifty Years, and paid the Debt of Nature at the Age of nine hundred and fifty. The ſacred Hiſtorian mentions no other Children of *Noah* than theſe three, from each of whom deſcended a numerous Race, which in Proceſs of Time peopled the whole Earth.

CHAP. III.

The Building of Babel, *and Confuſion of Tongues. Birth and Calling of* Abram. *Firſt Battle.* Abram *reſcues* Lot. *Circumciſion Inſtituted. God's Promiſe is renewed to* Abram, *who is now called* Abraham.

THERE was as yet but one Language uſed and known throughout the World; but the Sons of Men greatly multiplying, they extended their Habitations far and wide. Their chief Place of Reſidence is ſuppoſed to have been at the Foot of the Mountains of *Armenia*, but they now ſpread themſelves as far as *Syria*, and bending their Courſe Weſtward, ſome of them

(*e*) *Canaan.* That is all the Deſcendants of *Cham*, as well as himſelf, for *Canaan* was the Son of *Cham.*

(*f*) Bleſſed, &c. This Bleſſing had its Effect, for the true Worſhip of God, continued in the Race of *Shem*, and *Japheth* became very rich and powerful; an Inſtance of the Duty, Children owe their Parents, and that they ſhould cover their Faults, and not expoſe them.

And

took their Reſidence in the Land of *Shinar*, ſituated on the Banks of the *Tigris*, and comprehending the Country of *Eden*, which was afterwards called *Chaldea*.

A ſtriking Inſtance of the early Power of Ambition over the Minds of Mortals now preſents itſelf to our View; for thoſe new Inhabitants had not long taken Poſſeſſion of their reſpective Places of Abode, before they determined to render their Name famous among future Generations, by ſome Monument that might command their Admirarion. To effect this, they agreed to build a ſtrong City, and a Tower of ſuch monſtrous Height, that its Summit ſhould reach up to Heaven. From its intended Height, many have been led to think, that their Deſign of erecting it aroſe not only from Ambition, but alſo from fear, leſt they might be over whelmed, by a ſecond Deluge. Whatever was the Motive, we are aſſured by the ſacred Hiſtorian, that they ſet about the wild Project, undiſmayed by the Difficulty of the Work, and began to make the Materials, ſuch as Brick, and a Cement of ſlimy Clay inſtead of Mortar. They went on ſome Time with the Work; but the omiſcient *Jehovah* obſerved their Doings, knew the Pride and Wickedneſs of their Hearts, and determined to ſtop them in their ſinful Career, in Order to ſhew them, that weak Mortals can never eſcape the Power and Juſtice of the Almighty.

When the Creator beheld the Pride and Vanity of theſe his Creatures, he thus expoſtulates with himſelf, *Behold the People is one, and they have all one Language; and this they begin to do, (g) and now nothing will be reſtrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their Language, that they may not underſtand one anothers Speech.* The Almighty having thus reſolved by the Exertion of a miraculous Power to fruſtrate the towering Hopes of theſe aſpiring Mortals, ſo confounded their Tongues, that a univerſal Jargon enſued, and the different Dialects cauſed ſuch a Diſtraction of Thought, that incapable of underſtanding, or making known to each other their reſpective Ideas; nothing prevailed, but Confuſion and Diſorder, and they were thus forced to deſiſt from their Undertaking. By this aweful ſtroke of divine Juſtice, they were not only deprived of the Power to proceed on their intended Plan, but of one of the greateſt Pleaſures of a ſocial Being, mutual Converſe, and agreeable Intercourſe. We are not to ſuppoſe, that each Individual had a peculiar Dialect or Language, but only the ſeveral Tribes or Families, (computed to be Seventy) who therefore diſperſed, thoſe of one language, going one Way, and thoſe of another Language, bending their Courſe another Way. Two wiſe Ends were anſwered by divine Providence, in this ſcattering abroad a united People; the firſt was the Pre-

(g) And now nothing will be reſtrained from them, &c. The Meaning of this Expreſſion, is according to the beſt Commentators, And now nothing will hinder them from executing their Project, unleſs I interpoſe; or rather they imagine to do as they will.

Died,

vention of a wicked Deſign, and the ſecond, a more ſpeedy and general Increaſe of the Inhabitants of the Earth. The Building which they began to erect, was called *Babel*, or *Confuſion*, from the Judgment that attended their raſh and impious Undertaking.

The Family of the three Sons of *Noah*, being thus ſcattered abroad upon the Face of the Earth, they ſettled in different Parts of the World; ſome in *Aſia*, ſome in *Africa*, and ſome in *Europe*, particularly thoſe of the Family of *Japheth*.

The Confuſion of Tongues and Diſperſion of the Family of *Noah*, happened juſt an hundred and one Years after the Flood, as is evident from the Birth of *Peleg*, the Son of *Eber*, who was great Grandſon to *Shem*, and born in the hundredth and firſt Year after that memorable Period.

The wiſe diſpoſer of all Events, having thus ſeverely chaſtiſed the Folly and Preſumption of Mankind, and ſcattered them abroad over the Face of the Earth, that diſunited, they might not again attempt ſuch complicated Wickedneſs, as that of contending with his Power, and queſtioning his Truth, now reveals a Dawn of his glorious Deſign of chuſing to himſelf a peculiar People, which ſhould conſtitute the Church of God, the Company of the Faithful in all Ages that ſhould endure for ever.

This was the Birth of *Abram*, on which Account the inſpired Penman gives a very preciſe Account of the Genealogy of *Terah*, one of the Deſcendants of *Shem*, becauſe *Terah* was the Father of *Abram*, afterwards called *Abraham*, who was honoured by God with being Father of the Faithful, or Worſhippers of the true God; though *Terah* his Father was an Idolater, according to the Teſtimony of *Joſhua*, Chap. xxiv. Ver. 2.

Now *Terah* had three Sons, *Haran*, *Nahor*, and *Abram*, who was the youngeſt; *Haran* the eldeſt (*b*) died before his Father, leaving behind him one Son, named *Lot*, and two Daughters, *Milcah* and *Iſcah*, the latter of which was married to *Abram*, and called by the Jews *Sarai* for her Beauty and domeſtic Oeconomy.

Soon after, his Father *Terah* took *Abram*, his Grandſon *Lot*, and his Daughter-in-law *Sarai*, from *Ur*, a City of the *Chaldeans*, to Journey toward the Land of *Canaan*, and taking up their Abode at *Haran*, *Terah* died there by the Way, in the two hundredth and fifth Year of his Age.

It is evident from the Account of the inſpired Penman, that the Almighty had revealed himſelf to *Abram* before his Father's Death; for, according to *Gen.* xxii. 1. *The Lord had ſaid unto Abram*, &c. He had commanded him to leave the Country in which he then reſided, and travel to a Country he would ſhew. He promiſed to make him Father of a mighty People, and in him to bleſs all the Nations on the Earth.

(*b*) Died. &c. It is obſervable that this *Haran*, was the firſt Son that died in a natural Way before his Father; before this Inſtance, thoſe who were born firſt, died firſt.

Oak,

Abram ſtedfaſtly believing the divine Promiſe, though he knew not the Difficulties that might attend his Removal, nor even the Country in which he was to ſettle; immediately on the deceaſe of his Father *Terah*, prepared for his Journey, taking with him his Nephew *Lot*, his Wife *Sarai*, and the reſt of his Family, in order to go to the Land which God might appoint; and by his ſtrict Attention to the divine Command, prove at once his Faith and Obedience.

Accordingly he purſued his Journey, till he arrived at the Land of *Canaan* (the Place appointed by the divine Decree;) and that part of it which is called the (*i*) *Oak of Moreh*.

On his arrival at this Place, the Lord appeared to *Abram* again, repeating the Promiſe he had before made to him, viz. that his Poſterity ſhould inherit the Land, though he had no Iſſue as yet, and it was poſſeſſed by others; for the ſacred Hiſtorian writes, that THE CANAANITE WAS THEN IN THE LAND.

The Heart of pious *Abram* was affected with the Goodneſs and Loving-kindneſs of the Lord, and in the fullneſs of his Soul, be there erected an Altar to the God of all his Mercies. From thence he removed to a Mountain on the eaſt of *Bethel* and pitched his Tent between *Bethel* and *Hai*, where he likewiſe erected an Altar unto the Lord, and called upon the Name of his God.

He was ſoon compelled to remove from *Canaan*, a Famine happening in that Country; taking with him therefore his Family, he ſet out on a Journey to *Egypt*, determining to remain there, till God in the courſe of his Providence ſhould call him thence. It appears from the following hiſtory, that *Abram* had obſerved, on his Entry into theſe Parts, the difference of their Women, in Point of Shape, and Complexion, from thoſe of his own Country, and eſpecially his Wife *Sarai*, who was remarkable beautiful: fearing therefore ſhe might attract the Deſire of ſome of the great Men amongſt them and thereby indanger his Safety, (his Fear ſuggeſting to his Imagination, that if they found *Sarai* was his Wife they would diſpatch him, in order to pave the way for the Enjoyment of her) to prevent ſo dreadful a Cataſtrophe he made his Wife acquainted with his jealous Fear, and deſired her to paſs for his Siſter, in order to avoid the Danger, and for her Sake, be more generally reſpected in a ſtrange Country. Nor was *Abram*'s Fear without Foundation, for they no ſooner entered the Land of *Egypt*, than the Inhabitants were captivated with the Charms of his Wife, who in a ſhort Time became ſo celebrated amongſt them, that her Fame reached the Ears of the King, by whom ſhe was ſent for to Court, treated with the higheſt Honours; and *Abram*, for calling her

(*i*) Oak, &c. This in our Tranſlation, is rendered PLAIN, but the Septuagint and moſt other Verſions, has it Oak. But we ſhall treat more largely on the Subject, when we come to Conſider the Oak of MAMRE.

Siſter, met with the kindeſt Reception.

The Interpoſition of divine Providence, to preſerve inviolate the Honour of the Patriarch, and the Chaſtity of his Wife, is very remarkable; for to keep in due Bounds the Deſires of (*k*) *Paraoh*, and his Courtiers, God brought upon them divers Diſeaſes, and bodily Infirmities; and by that Means cauſed them to ſuſpect her to be a married Woman.

The King, ſtrongly impreſſed by ſo remarkable a Circumſtance, ſent for *Abram*, and upbraided him with ſpreading a falſe Report, which might have occaſioned him to have attempted the Violation of his Wife's Chaſtity; and in an angry Tone commanded him ſpeedily to depart with her on Pain of incurring his farther Diſpleaſure. However, he permitted him to remove without ſuſtaining the leaſt Loſs or Detriment in his Subſtance, which was very conſiderable, having received from the King moſt valuable Preſents, both in Cattle, in Silver, and in Gold.

Lot alſo had now acquired conſiderable Property; but as his Uncle *Abram* was under a Neceſſity of departing for *Egypt*, he accompanied him, not chuſing to remain in a ſtrange Country without ſo valuable a Friend and Companion.

On their departure from *Egypt*, they made towards *Bethel*, where *Abram* had before erected an Altar to the Lord, and now paid his Vows to the Moſt High again.

The Families and Poſſeſſions both of *Abram* and *Lot* being greatly multiplied, they frequently were in Want of Sufficiency of Proviſion for their Cattle in particular, which Want moſt probably aroſe from the late Famine that happened there, and the great Number of *Canaanitiſh* Inhabitants, who poſſeſſed the more fertile Parts of the Land. This Want of Paſture-Ground produced much diſpute between the Herdſmen of *Abram*, and thoſe of *Lot*, inſomuch that *Abram* fearing, that the Contention which prevailed between their Servants, might end in a Rupture between themſelves, reaſoned with his Kinſman *Lot* on the Subject, mildly addreſſing him in theſe Terms; *Let there be no Strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, and between my Herdſmen, and thy Herdſmen; for we be (i) Brethren.*

To prevent any diſagreeable Conſequence that might ariſe from their Continuance together on the ſame Spot, *Abram* wiſely propoſed a Separation, as he was convinced there was not ſufficient Accommodation for them both, their Subſtance being ſo prodigiouſly increaſed.

Such was the Prudence and Condeſcenſion of *Abram*, that though ſuperior in every Reſpect to *Lot*, he humbly offers him his Choice of Settle-

(*k*) *Pharaoh*, &c. *Pharaoh* was the common Name of the *Egyptian* Kings, and was a Title of Dignity, like that of *Cæſar* aſſumed by the *Roman* Emperors.

(*l*) Brethren. So the Ancients reputed, and called thoſe that ſprang from one common Root, though not in a direct Line, begotten by one and the ſame Father. In this Reſpect theſe were Brethren in a natural Relation; as with Reſpect to Religion, and the Worſhip of the true God, they were Brethren likewiſe in a ſpiritual Relation.

Oak

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MUSEUM

A Map of the
LAND or CANAAN,
and Parts adjacent:
at the Time of ABRAHAM's coming to sojourn therein: shewing the several People & Places mention'd in the History of the Patriarchs
THE GREAT
OR
WEST SEA
PART of EGYPT
LAND of GOSHEN or RAMESES
A Draught of the Countries above SIDON and DAMASCUS.
TARSHISH
THE WEST SEA
Hamath the Greater
Haran
Ur
MESOPOTAMIA
ARVADITE
ZEMARIE
Sinite
Hamath the Lesser
Arkite
Sidon
CANAAN
Damascus
PART OF CHALDEA
Sidon
Tyre
Iaashah or Dan
Hobah
Damascus
HIVITE
Ashteroth
Rephaim
GIRGASITE
Gilead or Mizpah
Mahanaim
Dothan
Penuel
Succoth
Ham
Shalem or Shechem
Moreh
ZUZIMS or Rephaim
AMMONITES
Luz or Bethel
Ai
Plain of Jordan
Jebusite
Rephaim
Salem
Bela or Zoar
Admah
Ephraim or Bethlehem
Gomorrah
Zeboim
EMIMS
Hittite
Mamre
Machpelah
Hebron or Mamre
Kirjatharba
Gerar
Ayims
Hazerim
Hadash
Land of Amalekites
Horims
KENIZZITE
Kenite
Land of the Philistines
Canaanite
Perizzite
Amorite
Azzah or Gaza
River of Egypt
Wilderness of Shur
Wilderness of Paran
Mount
Scale of Geographical Miles.
Gen. XIII.

ment in any Part that ſhould appear moſt eligible to him, and he himſelf would take the Refuſe; *if thou wilt take the left Hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right Hand, then I will go to the left.*

Lot ſoon acceded to ſo advantageous a Propoſal; and having firſt taken a View of the Country, and beheld that the Plain of *Jordan* was very fruitful, and well watered; he made Choice of that as his Spot of Reſidence.

Having ſeparated themſelves by mutual Conſent, *Lot* directed his Courſe towards the Eaſt, and fixed his Abode in the Plain of *Jordan*, pitching his Tent towards *Sodom*, the Inhabitants of which were in thoſe Days notorious for the moſt abominable of Crimes.

Lot had no ſooner departed, than the Almighty, ever mindful of his faithful Servant *Abram*, again called him, renewing the Promiſe he had made to him before. This is a peculiar Beauty and Simplicity in the Stile and Manner, in which the ſacred Hiſtorian records this Gift of God to our Father *Abram*. *Lift up now thine Eyes, and look from the Place where thou art, northward and ſouthward, and eaſtward and weſtward. For all the Land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed for ever. And I will make thy Seed as the Duſt of the Earth, ſo that if a Man can number the Duſt of the Earth, then ſhall thy Seed alſo be numbered. Ariſe, walk through the Land, in the Length of it, and in the Breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.*

The Patriarch then removed his Tent, and fixed his Habitation, near the *(m)* Oak of *Mamre*, which is in *Hebron*, and according to his uſual Cuſtom, whenever he pitched his Tent upon a new Spot, erected an Altar for the Worſhip of his God.

Soon after the Removal of *Abram* to the Oak of *Mamre*, happened the firſt pitched Battle recorded in ſacred Hiſtory. Four Kings were engaged againſt five, on the following Occaſion. CHEDORLAOMER, King of *Elam*, held five petty Kings in tributary Subjection to him. Theſe, in proceſs of Time, deſirous of throwing off the Yoke, determined to unite their Forces againſt him.

Chedorlaomer, hearing of this Combination, in Conjunction with three other Kings, proclaimed War againſt them, in order to reduce them to their former Subjection. A pitched Battle enſued, and the tributary Kings being defeated, each of them betook himſelf to Flight. The Kings of *Sodom* and

(*m*) Oak of *Mamre*, &c. This in moſt Verſions, as well that of the Plain of *Moreh*, is rendered *Oak*. An ancient Writer obſerves that this Oak was famous in the Time of *Conſtantine*, for Pilgrimages, and for the anniverſary Feaſt, which was ſolemnized there: that it was diſtant from *Hebron*, but ſix Miles, where there were ſtill to be ſeen ſome Cottages, which *Abram* had built near to that Oak, and a Well which he had digged. and whither the *Jews*, *Pagans*, and *Chriſtians*, travelled every Year, either out of Devotion, or a Deſign to Trade. Another Author aſſures us, that he had ſeen this Oak, and had carried home ſome of the Fruit and Wood of it; and farther obſerves, that its Leaves are ſomewhat larger, than thoſe of the Maſtick Tree, but its Fruit reſembles an Acorn.

There

Gomorrah in their Flight, are ſaid to have fallen in the Vale of *Siddim*, which was full of Pits, containing great Quantities of ſlimy Dirt or Clay. Whether they were purſued to thoſe Pits, and there ſlain by their victorious Enemies; or whether they betook themſelves there for the Sake of Shelter is not expreſſed by the ſacred Penman; but we are informed that the Conquerors plundered the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, made *Lot*, *Abram*'s Kinſman, Priſoner amongſt the Reſt, and ſeized on all his Poſſeſſions.

One of the Inhabitants that eſcaped, informed *Abram* of the Defeat, and of the hapleſs Fate of his Kinſman *Lot:* the Patriarch then dwelt at the Oak of *Mamre*, with *Eſhchol* and *Aner*, who were Brothers, and Aſſociates with him. The faithful *Abram* no ſooner heard of what had befalled his Kinſman, than he levied his utmoſt Force to his Reſcue, armed all his own Servants who were fit to bear Arms, to the Amount of three hundred and eighteen, and accompanied by his Aſſociates *Eſhchol* and *Aner* purſued the Spoilers as far as *Dan*.

Availing himſelf of the Covert of the Night, he put his Forces into proper Diſpoſition, and attacked them on all Quarters with the utmoſt Vehemence. So ſudden and vigorous an Attempt on an Army fatigued with a late Engagement, and revelling in the Spoils of Conqueſt, had the deſired Effect, for *Abram* obtained a complete Victory. *Chedorlaomer*, who exacted the Tribute from the Inhabitants of *Sodom* among the reſt, was ſlain, and his whole Army routed, and perſued by *Abram*'s victorious Party as far as *Hobah*, which is to the left of *Damaſcus*. Thus did *Abram* reſcue the Perſon and Property of his Nephew *Lot*, together with his whole Houſehold.

Having thus ſignalized both his Valour and Fidelity, he was highly careſſed by thoſe whoſe Cauſe he had ſo gallanty eſpouſed. Among the firſt was the King of *Sodom*, who in Token of the grateful Senſe he retained of the Patriarch's important Services, offered him as the Reward of his Valour the Goods he had reſcued, deſiring him only to reſtore the Priſoners. But *Abram*'s righteous Soul, diſdained to take Advantage of the Unfortunate; for reſerving to his Aſſociates that Part of the Plunder, to which their Services according to the Rules of War, entitled them, he reſtored to the King both his Subjects and Property; evincing throughout the whole of the Proceeding the moſt diſintereſt Fidelity, intrepid Courage, and inflexible Juſtice. The next by whom *Abram* was honoured for his laudable Conduct, was (*n*) *Melchizedec*, King of *Salem*,

(*n*) There have been, and ſtill are, various Opinion, concerning the Perſon and Character of this *Melchizedec* Several of the Fathers took him for the Son of God, who appeared to *Abram* in the Form of a Man; but how could the Son of God be a Type of himſelf, as the Apoſtle plainly tells us, *Melchizedec* was a Type of Chriſt? *Heb.* vii. 3. The moſt rational Opinion is, that he was one of the Princes of *Canaan*, who on Account of his Piety and Goodneſs was called *Melchiſedec*, that is *King of Righteouſneſs*, which the *Arabic* Verſion tranſlates as his Character, not his Name.

Several

who met him on his return from the Victory, preſented him with Bread and Wine for his Refreſhment, and bleſſed *Abram*, and the God of *Abram*, thro' whoſe omnipotent Arm he had gained ſo important a Victory.

As a Return for this grateful Behaviour, the victorious Patriarch, preſented *Mechizedec* with a tenth Part of the Spoils he had taken in the Expedition.

As *Abram* had now acted in the public Capacity of a Warrior, and might reaſonably expect that the Kings whom he had lately routed, would recruit their ſcattered Forces, and prepare for a ſecond Attack, the Almighty to fortify his Mind againſt all Fear, from the moſt potent Princes of the Earth, informs him in a Viſion, that he had undertaken his Defence, and would ever reward his Faithfulneſs: *Fear not Abram, I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward.* It appears from the Reſult, that notwithſtanding God had promiſed to *Abram* that his Seed ſhould inherit the Land; his preſent Want of Iſſue gave him ſome Concern: he therefore takes this Opportunity of diſtantly hinting the Promiſe; and reminding his Maker that he had not hitherto been pleaſed to beſtow an Heir upon him; but that his Servant was like to inherit his Eſtate. The Lord, to clear up his Doubts, and ſolve the Perplexities, which troubled his Mind, tells him, that not his Servant, but one that ſhould proceed from his own Bowels ſhould be his Heir, and that he ſhould not only have Heirs from his own Body, but a numerous Progeny, equally in Number, the Stars of Heaven. But ſuch was the Anxiety of the Patriarch, that he deſired ſome ſtriking Mark of the Divine Promiſe, *Take*, therefore ſaid the Lord, *an Heifer of three Years old, and a ſhe Goat of three Years old, and a Ram of three Years old, and a Turtle Dove, and a young Pigeon.*

Abram obeyed the Command of the Lord, and dividing the Beaſts, but not the Birds, laid each Piece upon the other, and when the Fowls came upon the Carcaſes, he drove them away. About the time of Sun ſet, a deep Sleep fell upon *Abram*, and he was ſeized with Surpriſe on Account of this Prediction from the Almighty. *Know of a Surety that thy Seed ſhall be a Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and ſhall ſerve them, and they ſhall afflict them four Hundred Years. And alſo that Nation, whom thou ſhalt ſerve will I judge, and afterward ſhall they come out with great Subſtance. And thou ſhalt go to thy Father in Peace, thou ſhalt be buried in a good old Age, but in the fourth Generation they ſhall come hither again, for the Iniquity of the* Amorites *is not yet full.*

To give him Aſſurance of the exact Accompliſhment of this Promiſe, God cauſed a ſmoking Furnace and a burning Lamp to appear, (*o*) which paſſed between the divided Pieces of Fleſh.

(*o*) Several of the ancient Fathers aſſert, that the Manner of making Alliance at this Time, was to divide the Victims into two Parts, and lay them on two Altars oppoſite each other, after which, the contracting Parties walked between, ſignifying that the Party which violated the

Thus was the Almighty pleaſed to ratify his Covenant with his choſen People; and having inſtructed *Abram* their Father in the various Fortunes of his Deſcendants, particularly marks out the Bounds of the promiſed Land, and reckons up the ſeveral Nations that inhabited it. *Unto thy Seed have I given this Land from the River of* Egypt, *&c.* Gen. xv. 18, 19, &c.

Sarai being now ſtricken in Years, and having waited the Fulfillment of the divine Promiſe about the ſpace of ten Years, inſomuch that ſhe began to deſpair from the Courſe of Nature of raiſing up Seed to her Husband, importuned him to take her Handmaid *Hagar* to be his (*p*) concubinary Wife, hoping that ſhe might conceive by him, and it would be a means of perpetuating their Family, and promoting the Accompliſhment of the divine Promiſe.

Abram at the Solicitation of *Sarai*, took *Hagar* to his Bed, and when ſhe found that ſhe had conceived, ſhe began to behave inſolently towards her Miſtreſs, who was much affected with the Scorn and Ingratitude of an *Egyptian*, to whoſe Advancement ſhe had ſolely contributed; and therefore warmly expoſtulates with her Husband on the unworthy Treatment ſhe had met with from her Handmaid, intimating, that his Fondneſs of her might not a little encourage her in the ſame. But the honeſt Patriarch, juſt in all his Dealings, and true to every Alliance, would by no Means countenance the leaſt Mark of Diſreſpect in *Hagar* towards her Miſtreſs, and to avoid every Suſpicion, wholly reſigns her to her Diſpoſal. *Behold thy Maid is in thy Hand; do to her as it pleaſeth thee.*

We find from the Reſult, that *Sarai* reſented the Injury ſhe had ſuſtained; for no ſooner was *Hagar* thus delivered up to the Will and Pleaſure of her Miſtreſs, than to avoid her Severity, ſhe fled away, and bent her Courſe towards her native Country.

In her Journey through the Deſarts, ſhe ſtopped at a Fountain of Water, in order to partake of its cooling Refreſhment, and reſt her Limbs wearied with travelling. Here ſhe was accoſted by a heavenly Meſſenger, who to impreſs her Mind with a due Senſe of her former Station and Duty, emphatically calls her, *Sarai's Maid*, intimating thereby, that though ſhe was admitted to her Maſter's Bed, ſhe was as indiſpenſibly ſubject to the Will of her Miſtreſs as ever, and therefore highly culpable in neglecting the Obedience ſhe ſtill owed her.

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the Covenant, ſhould be cut aſunder like unto a Victim. To this therefore we may ſuppoſe the Circumſtance before us to allude; the Almighty chuſing to illuſtrate his Mind and Will by a Plain Reference to a prevailing Cuſtom at that Time.

(*p*) In Concubinage, thoſe ſecondary or ſubordinate Wives were deemed lawful, and their Offſpring Legitimate; but in all other Reſpects they were inferior to the firſt and principal. So that as they had no ſhare in domeſtic Affairs, before they were Concubines, neither had they afterwards, but were in every Reſpect ſubject to their Miſtreſſes.

SARAI *giveth* HAGAR *to* ABRAM, Gen:16.

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When the Angel enquired of her the Cauſe of her Departure, and the Place of her Deſtiny, ſhe informed him, That ſhe fled from the Face of her angred Miſtreſs; upon which, without making any farther Remarks, he commanded her immediately to return to her Maſter's Houſe, and to her former Obedience to her Miſtreſs.

However, to encourage her in the Proſecution of her Duty, he aſſured her, That her Seed ſhould be exceedingly multiplied; and to convince her of the Divinity of his Miſſion, not only acquainted her, that he knew of her Conception, which was not yet diſcoverable to the Sight, but gave her preciſe Directions, with reſpect to the naming of the Child ſhe then conceived, a Circumſtance of great Conſequence, and one of the principal Superſtitions of the *Egyptians*. *Thou ſhalt call his Name* Iſhmael, *becauſe the Lord hath heard thy Affliction.*

It appears, that though *Hagar* was an *Egyptian*, ſhe had imbibed from *Abram* juſt Notions of the true God, and of the Worſhip due to him from his Creatures, as well as the immediate Interpoſition of his Providence on particular Occaſions, for the Well was called, *Beer-la-hai-roi*, that is, *the Well of the living Viſion*, or *the Well of him that liveth and ſeeth me.*

Being thus admoniſhed and encouraged by the heavenly Meſſenger, ſhe returned to her former Service, ſubmitted herſelf to her Miſtreſs, and was kindly received.

In due Time ſhe was delivered of a Son, whom *Abram*, according to the Angel's Direction, called *Iſhmael.*

Abram being now eighty-ſix Years old, it pleaſed God, leſt in his extreme Joy he ſhould deem the Child of his Handmaid, the Earneſt of the Fulfilment of the great Promiſes that God had made him, to defer the Bleſſing yet thirteen Years longer; for when he was ninety-nine Years old, the Lord appeared unto him, and thus ſpake: *I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect, and I will make my Covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.* Struck with the ſolemn, yet gracious Addreſs, the Patriarch fell proſtrate before his God, when the Lord was pleaſed to reſume his Diſcourſe; and, as a farther Confirmation of the Reſpect he bore unto him, changed his Name from *Abram* to *(q) Abraham.*

To ratify the Covenant thus ſolemnly made, God was pleaſed to inſtitute the Rite of Circumciſion, as a Seal or Pledge of the ſame, commanding That every Male Child, of eight Days old, whether born in the Houſe, or bought with Money, ſhould be circumciſed in the Fore Skin of his Fleſh, on Pain of being cut off from the Covenant, and deemed an Alien from the Common Wealth of *Iſrael.*

Accordingly, *Abraham* took his Son *Iſhmael*, and all that were bought

(q) *Abraham.* His former Name *Abram*, denotes *a high Father*; but his new Name, *Abraham*, ſignifies, *a Father of a great Multitude*, as he certainly was according to the divine Promiſe, *Gen.* xvii. and 5. *a Father of many Nations have I made thee.*

Sarai

with his Money, even every Male in his Houſe, the very Day in which God commanded him, and performed on them the Rite of Circumciſion.

Having changed the Name of *Abram* into that of *Abraham*, it ſeemed meet unto divine Wiſdom, to change the Name of his Wife, from (*r*) *Sarai* to *Sarah*, promiſing at the ſame Time by her to raiſe up Seed to his faithful Servant.

CHAP. IV.

Abraham *entertains three Angels. Intercedes with God in behalf of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah. *Dreadful Judgment inflicted on* Lot's *Wife. Deſtruction of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah. Lot's *Inceſt. Birth of* Iſaac, *and Rejection of* Hagar *and* Iſhmael. Abraham's *Covenant with* Abimelech, Abraham *offers up his Son* Iſaac *at the divine Command.*

NOtwithſtanding the exceeding Joy which *Abraham* received from the Promiſe of an Heir from the Body of his Wife *Sarah*; his parental Affection for *Iſhmael*, his firſt-born, and Suſpicion that on the Birth of a Child by the Free-Woman, he might be deprived of that deſcended from the Bond-Woman, cauſed him moſt cordially to cry out, *O that* Iſhmael *might live before thee!*

The Lord therefore, in his infinite Goodneſs ſoon cleared up his Doubt, and to prevent his thinking that *Iſhmael had any Share*, in the Covenant eſtabliſhed between them, aſſured him, That his Wife *Sarah* ſhould conceived and bear him a Son, through whoſe Loins the Promiſe ſhould be fulfilled, though at the ſame Time he had favourable Reſpect unto *Iſhmael*. *As for* Iſhmael, *I have heard thee; behold I have bleſſed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve Princes ſhall he beget, and I will make him a great Nation.*

But farther, to ſtrengthen his Faith in God's Promiſe, the preciſe Time of which *Sarah* ſhould bear a Son is mentioned, which was the very next (*s*) Year; and leſt he ſhould admit the leaſt Doubt of the preciſe Accompliſhment of the long deſired Event, God appeared to him in a different Shape, as a farther Confirmation of the Truth of his Word.

As the Patriarch was one Day at his Tent Door, for the Benefit of the Air, he eſpied three Perſons, whom he took for Men coming towards him; and, according to the Cuſtom of thoſe Times, roſe from his Seat, ran to meet them, and ſaluted them by bowing himſelf toward the Ground. Still imagining them to be ſome of the Deſcendants of *Adam*, liable to Fatigue, and therefore deſirous of Refreſhment; he importunes them to ſtay and par-

(*r*) *Sarai.* The Word *Sarai*, ſignifies, *my Princeſs*, or chief of my Family only; but *Sarah* ſignifies, *Princeſs or Chief of Multitudes*, according to *Gen.* xvii. 16. *She ſhall be a Mother of Nations, Kings of People ſhall be of her.*

(*s*) See *Gen.* xvii. 21.

take of whatever his Habitation afforded, before they purſued their Journey.

On their accepting his Invitation, neceſſary Preparations were made for their Entertainment, at which the Patriarch attended in Perſon. In the Courſe of their Converſation, one of them enquired concerning his Wife, and on his informing him, that ſhe was in the Tent, to his Surprize and Aſtoniſhment, thus beſpoke him, *I will certainly return unto her, according to the Time of Life, and lo Sarah thy Wife, ſhall have a Son.* By this *Abraham* was convinced beyond doubt, that theſe three Viſitants were Meſſengers from Heaven, and that one of them was the peculiar Repreſentative of the Almighty. *Sarah* had liſtened attentively to the Diſcourſe that paſſed between her Husband, and his ſtrange Gueſts; but conſidering the advanced Age both of herſelf and her Husband, ſhe regarded not their Prediction, eſteeming the common Order of Nature rather than the infallible Promiſe of the God of Truth and Omnipotence, and even laughed within herſelf at the Improbability of ſuch an Event. Tho' this impious Behaviour was ſeverely reprimanded by the divine Meſſenger, yet ſhe denied that ſhe had laughed; till it was poſitively fixed upon her, in theſe Words, *Nay, but thou didſt Laugh.*

This finiſhed the Converſe, the Strangers prepared to depart, and the Patriarch finding they intended to go towards *Sodom*, accompanied them on their Way. As they journeyed together, God was pleaſed to manifeſt his peculiar regard to *Abraham*, in foretelling the dreadful Judgment he intended to inflict upon *Sodom*, which inſtance of his Kindneſs was founded upon an Aſſurance, that *Abraham* would command not only his Children, but his Houſhold after him, to perſevere in the true Fear and Worſhip of God.

While the Lord was relating his Deſign upon that City of Abomination, the two Angels departed and proceeded towards the ſame; but *Abraham* continued in Converſe with the Lord, and even ventured from an Aſſurance of the Divine Favour, to intercede for that wicked City. Imagining the ſupreme and equitable Judge of the Earth would do right; the Patriarch mediates for *Sodom*, in ſix petitionary Propoſitions, leſſening the ſuppoſed Number of pious Inhabitants from fifty to ten; that even on their Account the Lord would withdraw his avenging Rod and avert the impending Danger: This Requeſt was granted by his Creator to the Father of the Faithful, who returned home abundantly ſatisfied with ſuch peculiar Tokens of the Divine Love. The other two Gueſts, who ſet out from the Tent of *Abraham*, purſued their Journey towards *Sodom*, and arrived there in the Evening. Righteous *Lot*, who ſat in the Gate of the City, haſtily roſe up to meet them, and having ſaluted them in the uſual Manner, invited them to refreſh and repoſe themſelves that Night with him.

The Benevolence and Hoſpitality of *Lot* are remarkable in the Importunities which he uſed to the Angels,

eſpecially as he was then ſettled among a People, who were inſolent on Account of their Wealth, void of Humanity towards Men, or Piety towards God, Strangers to Hoſpitality, and loſt to every Principle of Goodneſs. Amidſt this Sink of Vice *Lot* remained untainted, and ſeems to have rivalled the Hoſpitality of his Uncle *Abraham*.

Such was his Importunity, that the divine Meſſengers were prevailed upon to accept the Invitation: but before they retired to Reſt, many of the vile Inhabitants of that corrupted City encompaſſed the Houſe of *Lot*, commanding him, on Pain of ſuſtaining much Damage, to bring out the Strangers which ſojourned with them, that they might (*t*) know them.

The poor old Man at firſt endeavoured, by gentle Means, to quell the Outrage, deſiring them to ſuffer the Strangers to remain in his Houſe unmoleſted, as they had committed themſelves to his Care and Protection; nay, ſo great was his Concern for the Safety and Honour of his Gueſts, that to appeaſe the inſatiable Luſt of the *Sodomites*, he even made an unjuſtifiable Proffer of his two Virgin Daughters, which though undoubtedly an Error in *Lot*, demonſtrates how inviolably ſacred the Laws of Hoſpitality were held in thoſe Days amongſt the Juſt and Good. But the *Sodomites* were ſo abandoned to Wickedneſs, and ſo deaf to every Remonſtrance of Reaſon, Juſtice, and Virtue, that they freed him from the diſagreeable Neceſſity of expoſing his Daughters, tho' he was determined not to give up his Gueſts; commanding him to *ſtand back*, and remain quiet, remembering that he was but a Sojourner among them, and therefore not intitled to direct their Conduct and Behaviour, and threatening him moreover with very rigorous Treatment, if he preſumed any farther to interrupt them.

Finding all their Threatenings ineffectual, they determined to effect that by Force, which they could not by Fear; and, preſſing hard, attempted to break the Door; but the divine Meſſengers prevented their iniquitous Deſign, by pulling *Lot* into the Houſe, ſhutting the Door, and through an Exertion of ſupernatural Power, bringing on the Rioters a temporary Blindneſs, inſomuch that they departed, being rendered incapable of finding out the Houſe.

When they had an Opportunity of converſing, without Interruption, the heavenly Gueſts enquired of their Hoſt concerning his Family, aſſuring him, that the Almighty had determined to deſtroy that abominable City; and admoniſhing him immediately to remove from thence, with his whole Family, and all his Poſſeſſions.

(*t*) Know, &c. That is, abuſe them in that unnatural and deteſtable Manner, which was expreſsly forbidden in the Law, *Levit.* xviii. 22. and there made capital, Chapter xx. 13. This abominable Practice prevailed among the Gentiles even in the Time of the Apoſtles, as we learn from *Rom.* i. 17. It is ſtill called Sodomy, becauſe ſo generally practiſed by the People of *Sodom*, and is yet by our *Engliſh* Laws puniſhable with Death.

Bela

LOT'S HOSPITALITY. Gen. 19.

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Thus warned, *Lot* informed thoſe who were betrothed to his Daughters, of the awful Event, that ſo nearly approached, adviſing them to go with him, and ſo avoid the general Ruin; but they derided the Counſel he gave them, and were involved in the common Deſtruction.

As ſoon as the earlieſt Dawn of the enſuing day appeared, the heavenly Meſſengers haſtened the Departure of *Lot*; ſaying. *Ariſe, take thy Wife and thy two Daughters, which are here, leſt thou be conſumed in the Iniquity of the City.* The good Man rather lingered, hoping the Sentence againſt this wretched People might be rovoked; but his Delay was vain, for inſtead of ten righteous, that Abraham had capitulated for; no more than four, and all thoſe of Lot's Family (himſelf included) were appointed to eſcape the dreadful Judgment, ready to be executed on this abominable Race: Knowing therefore the Neceſſity of immediate Departure, the Angels took him, his Wife, and two Daughters, by Force, and brought them out of the City; and bid them haſten for their Lives, nor look back, nor ſtay upon the Plain, leſt they were conſumed with this wicked People.

Lot finding the Mountain to which he was warned to eſcape was very remote, intreated of the Angels, that they might be permitted to direct their Courſe to a little adjacent City which was then called *(u) Bela*, but afterwards *Zoar*, or the LITTLE CITY. *Lot*'s Requeſt was granted by the Angels, who commanded him to haſten thither, adding as an Encouragement. *I cannot do any Thing, till thou be come thither.*

Lot, his Wife, and Daughters, were particularly warned from looking back, and enjoined by every Means to haſten their Eſcape; yet before they reached *Zoar*, the City of Refuge, his Wife, prompted by ſome fatal Curioſity, looked back, was turned into a Pillar of (*w*) Salt, and became a ſtanding Monument of God's Vengeance on obſtinate Offenders, and the flagrant Diſobedience of a poſitive Command. *Lot* and his Daughter, however proceeded on their Journey according to the divine Command, and arrived at the City of *Zoar*, by Sun-riſe. And now the Almighty Arm of an incenſed God, prepares the awful Judgment ready to be executed againſt *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, and the reſt of the ſinful Cities of the Plain. Showers of

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(*u*) *Bela.* This City was the Reſidence of one of the five tributary Kings, who fought with the four Kings, and were driven into the Vale of *Siddim.*

(*w*) Salt, &c. To anticipate the Ridicule of the Atheiſt and Libertine, we obſerve in this Place; that the Salt into which the Wife of *Lot* was turned, was not of the common, but *Metallic* Kind, which was hewn out of the Rocks, like Marble, and uſed to build Houſes, according to the Teſtimony of ſeveral eminent Writers. From hence this Expreſſion has been taken in a Metaphorical Senſe, as a firm and ſure Covenant is called a Covenant of Salt, *Num.* xviii. 19. From the Durableneſs of its Nature: the Word, *Metallic* ſhould indeed have been added in our Tranſlation.

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liquid Fire inſtantaneouſly fall, and the guilty Wretches are conſumed in a Moment.

Lot, obſerving the Calamity of the other Cities, and doubting his Safety in *Zoar*, withdrew with his two Daughters to the Mountains, and there dwelt with them in a Cave. In this Retirement happened a moſt melancholy Event, which doubtleſs grieved the righteous Soul of *Lot*; this was a Commiſſion of a Crime no leſs flagrant than Inceſt; for his two Daughters, having loſt their eſpouſed Husbands in the Deſtruction of *Sodom*, and deſpairing of having any others [for they thought the late Conflagrations had extended to the whole human Race, excepting their own Family] agreed upon a Scheme to ſeduce their innocent Father, in order to preſerve the Race of Mankind. Whatever might be their Motive, it is a melancholy Truth, that they had a moſt wicked and unnatural Deſign upon their Father; and as they knew from his virtuous Diſpoſition, that ſo long as he retained his Reaſon, they could not obtain the ſame; they reſolved to draw him in to drink inſenſibly; till his Senſe was impaired, though not his Strength.

The eldeſt Daughter, who was moſt forward in promoting the impious Deſign, perſuaded the old Man, under Pretence of recruiting his Spirits after the late alarming Circumſtance, to drink till he became ſtupified, and having put him to reſt, went to Bed to him, where having perpetrated the horrid Inceſt, ſhe aroſe again, without the old Man's perceiving when ſhe aroſe and when ſhe lay down.

The following Night, the youngeſt Daughter, at the Example and Inſtigation of her Siſter, committed the ſame deteſtable Offence, and aroſe in the ſame Manner, unperceived by her Father.

They both conceived from the inceſtuous Congreſs; and *Lot* became, from the vicious Plot of his Children, both Father and Grand-father, to the ſhameful Progeny: but juſtly ſhocked at the unnatural and ſinful Commerce, we do not find that he ſo much as gave them a Name; for they were named by the Mothers (a very uncommon Practice in theſe Days) the eldeſt Daughter calling her Son *Moab*, and the younger naming her's *Bem-ammi*; they both proved in proceſs of Time inveterate Enemies to the *Iſraelites*, particularly the Race of the former.

As ſacred Hiſtory is ſilent, after this black Circumſtance, concerning the Tranſactions of *Lot*, we proceed to conſider the peculiar Dealings of Providence with that eminent Servant of God, *Abraham*.

The pious Patriarch abode in *Mamre*, till he had been Eye-witneſs to the Deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; after which awful Diſpenſation of divine Providence, he removed from thence to the Southward, and took up his Abode in *Gerar*, the chief City of *Paleſtine*.

Here the Patriarch had Recourſe to the ſame Policy, which he practiſed before, and an Agreement paſed between

tween him and his Wife, that they ſhould call each Brother and Siſter. The (x) King of *Gerar*, ſuppoſing that was the Alliance between them, cauſed *Sarah* to be taken from *Abraham*, intending to take her for his Concubine, but the Almighty warned him in a Dream from committing the iniquitous Act, by aſſuring him that Death would be the Penalty of taking to his Bed a Woman whoſe Husband was a Prophet.

Abimelech alledged in Vindication of his Deſign, that *Abraham* had given out, that the Woman was his Siſter, and ſending for the Patriarch, reprimanded him very ſeverely, for impoſing on him, who had treated him with the kindeſt Offices of Friendſhip.

Abraham plainly told him, he made the Report to ſave his Life, fearing he might be ſlain for the ſake of his Wife, though he had not lied in the ſame, for ſhe was the Daughter of his Father, though not of his Mother. As *Abimelech* had experienced the divine Interpoſition in the behalf of *Abraham*, his Anger ſoon ſubſided, and to aſſure the Patriarch of the Continuance of his Favour, he reſtored to him his Wife, with very valuable Preſents, and gave him full liberty of ſettling in any part of his Country he might chuſe as the moſt agreeble Reſidence.

He likewiſe did peculiar Honour to *Sarah* in theſe Words; *Behold I have given to thy Brother a thouſand Pieces of Silver; behold he is to thee a Covering of the Eyes unto all that are with thee; and with all other: thus ſhe was (y) reproved, or* rather *juſtified.*

God had not only awed the King from ſinful Commerce with *Sarah* by a Dream, but alſo by afflicting him with a Kind of Impotence, but now, at the Interceſſion of *Abraham*, his Health and Fertility were happily reſtored.

The long expected Promiſe was now fulfilled to the waiting Patriarch, who was bleſſed with the Sight of an Heir from the Body of *Sarah* his Wife, though they were both advanced in Years.

Whatever eternal Truth hath ſaid, Almighty Power is concerned to execute. God had ſaid it, and behold! *Sarah* is delivered of a Son, who is called by his Father according to former Direction (z) *Iſaac*, and, in Obedience to the divine Command, circumciſed when he was eight Days old.

It is difficult to conceive the Joy of

(x) The Kings were generally called by the Title of *Abimelech*, as thoſe of *Egypt* were called by that of *Pharoah*.

(y) Reproved. There is here a moſt flagrant Error in our Tranſlation. The Word rendered *reproved*,, never has that Meaning; but ſignifies to ſearch or enquire into a Thing, till it is cleared, and put beyond a Doubt. Beſides Reproof, in this Caſe, would have been very abſurd, for *Abraham* had already juſtified *Sarah*. It ſhould therefore be rendered *juſtified*: the Deſign of *Abimelech*, by this Bounty, being to juſtify *Sarah*'s Virtue, it being the Cuſtom, in thoſe Days, to confirm the Truth of any Thing that had been doubtful by Preſents, ſee *Gen.* xxi. and xxx.

(z) *Iſaac*, this Word ſignifies *Laughter*.

the aged Pair on this auſpicious Event; greatly did they rejoice in experiencing that the Promiſes of God were all *Yea*, and *Amen*. Now might *Sarah* laugh with Joy, and not with Diſtruſt as ſhe had done before. As the Birth of *Iſaac* was Cauſe of exceeding Conſolation to *Sarah*, ſo on the other Hand, it could not fail of being Matter of Diſguſt to *Hagar*, who from the advanced Age of her Miſtreſs had moſt probably flattered herſelf, that her Son ſhould be honoured with being her Maſter's Heir.

The Mother and Son could not long ſtifle the Reſentment of ſo affecting a Diſappointment, for ſoon after *Iſaac* was weaned, his Mother detected *Iſhmael* in *mocking* him, or treating him with Deriſion and Ridicule. Incenſed that ſo flagrant an Inſult ſhould be offered her Son, by the Child of a Bond-woman, *Sarah* importuned her Husband to turn *Hagar* and her Son out of his Habitation, intimating that the Son of a Slave had no title to Heirſhip, which ſolely belong to her Son *Iſaac*.

The good old Patriarch was brought to a very intricate Situation, and from the Love he bore to *Iſhmael* undetermined how to proceed; but that gracious God who had directed him in every important Caſe, ſoon confirmed his Reſolution. *Let it not be grieveus in thy Sight, becauſe of the Lad, and becauſe of thy Bond-woman, in all that* Sarah *hath ſaid unto thee, hearken unto her Voice; for in* Iſaac *ſhall thy Seed be called. And alſo of the Son of the Bond-woman will I make a Nation, becauſe he is thy Seed.*

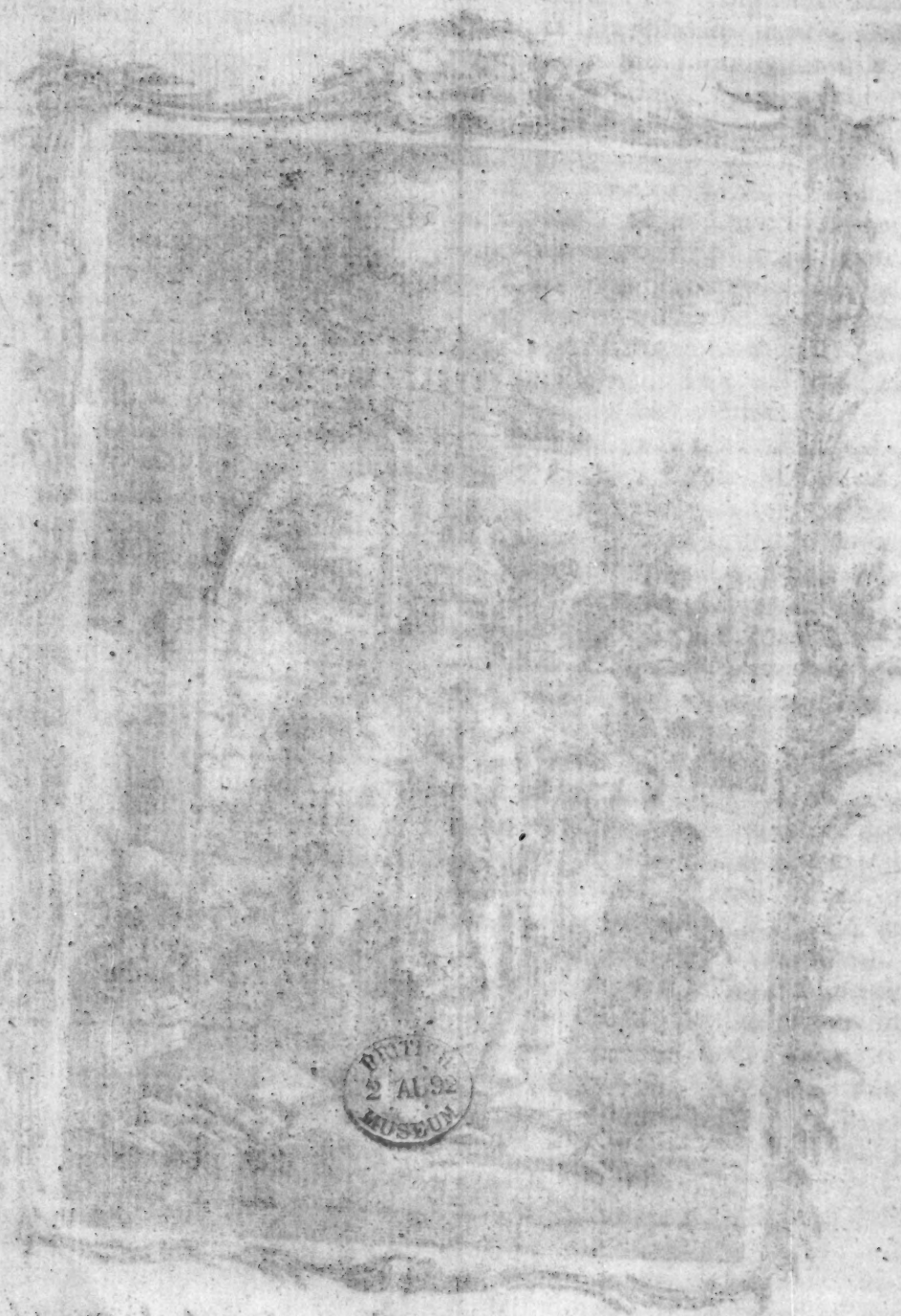
Thus determined by the divine Appointment, *Hagar* once more becomes a Wanderer, nor could the Fondneſs of *Abraham* for her Son *Iſhmael* prevent her Fate, it was the Lord's Command, nor durſt the Patriarch refuſe to obey, but having ſupplied her with ſome Bread and a Bottle of Water, he diſmiſſed her, and ſhe wandered about in the Deſerts of *Beerſheba*.

When her Bottle was empty, and ſhe had long rambled in vain, ſeeking Water in a parched Country to allay the Thirſt of her periſhing Child, ſhe placed him at the foot of a Tree, and went herſelf and ſat down at a conſiderable Diſtance, that ſhe might not behold the dying Pangs of her beloved *Iſhmael*.

A melancholy Scene enſued, the feeble Tongue of the Child begged Relief from the tender Mother whoſe Woes were doubled by her Want of Power; his preſſing Demands could only be anſwered by her guſhing Tears, and they had no other Proſpect before them, than Deſpair and Death. But the Ears of boundleſs Mercy are ever open to the Cries of Diſtreſs; and the Hand of Bounty is ever ready to diſpenſe Aid to the Indigent; for in this moſt deſperate Situation; the Lord heard, the Lord pitied, the Lord relieved. A chearing Promiſe was given to the fainting Handmaid, and a Well of Water ſupplied for the Refreſhment of the expiring Child.

The Mother and Son afterwards took up their Abode in the Wilderneſs of PARAN, where the Lord bleſſed them, and *Iſhmael* becoming an expert Archer

Hagar *and* Ishmael *cast out*. Gen. *21.14.*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Archer, furniſhed both himſelf and Mother with neceſſary Proviſions. When he arrived to Years of Maturity, his Mother being an *Egyptian*, took him a Wife out of her native Country.

Abraham having received ſo many Tokens of Reſpect at the Hands of *Abimelech*, accepts of the Invitation to reſide in his Country; and the King obſerving the Succeſs with which it pleaſed God to crown all the Undertakings of the pious Patriarch, who now became very powerful, and fearing, leſt in future Time, his Influence ſhould become ſo great as to endanger the Security of his Crown; at the Inſtigation of *Phicol*, the General of all his Forces, he entered into a League of Friendſhip with *Abraham*.

The Treaty being made and confirmed by an Oath, and a Difference compoſed concerning a Well of Water, which *Abraham* had digged, and *Abimelech's* Servants, without the Knowledge of their Maſter, had forcibly ſeized; but now, on the Patriarch's Complaint, was reſtored to him. *Abraham*, as a Token of Friendſhip, preſented ſome Sheep and Oxen to *Abimelech*, who, with his General, took Leave and returned to his Court, while the Patriarch planted a (*a*) Grove, in *Beer-ſheba*, and called on the Name of the Lord, the everlaſting God.

The Lord in his wiſe Providence had already, in divers Inſtances, and on many Occaſions, put *Abraham's* Faith and Obedience to the Teſt; but now he tries him in the tendereſt Point, a Point in which every Tie of parental Affection bound him, and to give up which, required a Degree of Reſignation, uncommon to the beſt of Men. He is required, by his God, to ſacrifice his Son, to imbrue his Hands in the Blood of a darling Child.

Iſhmael was now to him no more; he had parted with him at the divine Command, and transferred his Affection wholly to *Iſaac*; and this Son, this *only* Son, who had been given him by divine Promiſe, and was the Ground of his future Expectation, muſt fall a Victim, by the unalterable Decree of Heaven. Hard Task to Fleſh and Blood! Severe Trial to human Nature! But if the Fleſh ſhuddered, the Spirit was reſolute; GOD commands, the Patriarch obeys.

Without Heſitation or the leaſt Delay, he roſe early in the Morning, and proceeded towards the Place appointed by the Lord, which was the Land of (*b*) *Moriah*, accompanied only by his Son *Iſaac*, and attended by two Servants, who led an Aſs, that carried the Proviſions, together with the Wood, Inſtruments, and other Things neceſſary for the Sacrifice. On the

(*a*) Grove. Though this Grove was planted from Force of Cuſtom and Example, it being the univerſal Practice of the Heathens, to plant Groves and therein ſet up their Idols and Altars: yet *Abraham* followed not their Idolatry, but called on the Name of the Lord, the everlaſting God.

(*b*) *Moriah*. That is the Land of Viſion, according to many Interpreters, and ſhews that the Words of our Lord; *Abraham* ſaw *my Day*, alludes to this extraordinary Circumſtance.

third Day's Journey, they came within Sight of the Place: when *Abraham* ordered his Servants to ſtop with the Aſs, while he and the Lad went in further to worſhip; which done, they would return to them again.

The harmleſs *Iſaac*, ignorant of the Deſign of his pious and affectionate Parent, went on chearfully with him, and the old Patriarch, relying on the Faithfulneſs of the divine Promiſe, overcame the Strugglings of natural Affection, that might have retarded his Compliance with the Will of God, and proceeded with a Reſolution worthy the Father of the Faithful.

Thus advanced the Father and Son to execute a moſt awful Injunction; but as they approached the appointed Place; the Lad obſerving that a Lamb, the moſt eſſential requiſite for the Sacrifice was wanting, innocently enquired of his Father, where was the Lamb for a Burnt-offering? This Enquiry could not but touch the affectionate Parent in the moſt tender Part, as it at once indicated the Innocence and Piety of the Child; Nevertheleſs, behold his Reliance even yet on the Faithfulneſs of an immutable God! *My Son, God will provide himſelf, a Lamb for the Burnt-offering.*

Being now arrived at the Place of which God had told him, he built an Altar, and having prepared the Inſtruments, and laid the Wood in Order, embraced his Son, and then bound him. The ſacred Hiſtorian, like a great Painter, had drawn a Veil over the Sorrows of *Abraham*, and the Reſignation of *Iſaac*, that the Imagination of the Reader might paint to him more forcibly, the Struggles of the Parent and the Agonies of the Son, than words can poſſibly expreſs. *Iſaac* was at this Period about twenty-five Years of Age, and his Father enfeebled with Years; his Reſignation therefore muſt certainly have been *(c)* voluntary.

Every Preparation being now made, *Abraham* ſtretched forth his Hand to give the finiſhing Stroke to the Life of his Child, when, behold! God is ſatisfied with the Faith and Obedience of the Father, and the Piety and Reſignation of the Son; a heavenly Meſſenger is diſpatched to avert the fatal Blow, and to aſſure the Patriarch, that God had accepted this Act of Obedience as the ſtrongeſt Teſtimony of his Faith and Fear. *And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of Heaven, and ſaid,* Abraham; Abraham, *and he ſaid, Here am I. And he ſaid, Lay not thine Hand upon the Lad; neither do thou any Thing unto him; for now I know that thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt not witheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.*

The obedient Patriarch had no ſooner taken off his Eyes from the dear, though intended Victim, than he beheld a Ram caught in a Thicket by his Horns, which at the gracious Subſtitute of Providence, he immediately took and offered for a Burnt-offering, inſtead of his beloved Son.

On this infallible Token of *Abra-*

(c) Voluntary. A ſtrong and exact Type of our bleſſed Redeemer, who *voluntary* laid down his Life for us; though no one could *otherwiſe* take it from him.

ABRAHAM'S FAITH. Gen. 22.

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ham's Obedience, the Lord was pleaſed to renew his gracious Promiſe to him with enlarged Abundance, and even to confirm the ſame by a moſt ſolemn Oath: *By myſelf have I ſworn*, &c.

Having thus conformed to the divine Will, and received a moſt convincing Teſtimony of the divine Approbation; *Abraham* and his Son returned to his Servants, and they went joyfully together to *Beer-ſheba*, the Place of his Reſidence; whither, on his arrival, he was ſaluted with the welcome News of the Increaſe of his Family; for *Milcah*, the Wife of his Brother *Nabor*, had born *Rebecca*, who was afterwards Wife to his Son *Iſaac*.

CHAP. V.

Death of Sarah. Abraham *purchaſes a Burial-Place. Procures* Rebecca *as Wife for his Son* Iſaac. *Death of* Abraham. *Birth of* Eſau *and* Jacob. Eſau *ſells his Birth-right.*

THE Sacred Hiſtorian is ſilent with reſpect to the Time that *Abraham* abode at *Beer-ſheba*; but informs us, that he afterwards reſided at *Kirjath-arba*, where he buried his Wife *Sarah*, who paid the Debt of Nature, in the hundred and twenty-ſeventh Year of her Age.

Having obſerved the funeral Ceremonies for his Wife, he applied to the (*d*) *Hittites* for a Place to bury his Dead. The *Hittites* paying a Deference to the Patriarch, who was a mighty Man, and highly favoured by Providence, gave him the choice of their Sepulchres for that neceſſary Purpoſe.

Abraham acknowledged the Favour, by bowing himſelf to the People of the Land; but as his Race was a peculiar Generation, diſtinguiſhed by God from all other Nations, and therefore it was not lawful for them to mix with any other, he propoſed to buy a Piece of Ground for a ſeparate Sepulchre for him and his Family, and therefore deſired them to intreat *Ephron*, the Prince of the Country, to ſell him the Cave of *Macpelah*, offering for it its utmoſt Value.

Application being made to *Ephron*; he generouſly offered the Patriarch not only the Cave, but the whole Field, as a Burying-Place. *Abraham* acknowledged the Bounty of the Offer; but as he had ever acted on a Principle of ſtrict Juſtice, he deſired the Prince to fix a Price upon the Field; and that on ſuch Condition he would take Poſſeſſion of it for the Purpoſe propoſed.

The Prince finding the Patriarch thus reſolved, told him the Ground was worth (*e*) four hundred Shekels, a Sum beneath the Conſideration of a

(*d*) *Hittites*. Theſe *Hittites* were deſcended from *Heth*, the Son of *Canaan*, and Grandſon of of *Ham*, whom *Noah* had curſed, and then poſſeſſed that Country.

(*e*) Four hundred Shekels, &c. This amounted to forty-ſix Pounds, thirteen Shillings and upwards.

Man of ſuch immenſe Property, and therefore deſired he would immediately apply it to his Uſe in burying his Dead.

Abraham being told the Price, immediately *(f)* weighed the Money to *Ephron*, four hundred Shekels, *(g)* current Money with the Merchant, in the Preſence of a great Number of People, and the Field was thereupon conveyed to him (according to the Cuſtom of thoſe Times) and his Heirs for ever; and then, and not till then, did the Patriarch bury his Wife.

As *Abraham* was now ſtricken in Age, being near an hundred and forty Years old, he became naturally deſirous of ſeeing his Son married and ſettled, before his Departure out of this tranſitory Life. He therefore called to him an old and truſty Servant, and having exacted from him a (*b*) ſolemn Oath, laid ſtrict Charge upon him, that he would not take a Wife for his Son of the Daughters of the *Cananites*; and enjoined him to go to his own (*Abraham's*) Country, and take a Wife unto *Iſaac* of his own Kindred.

The Servant having received ſo ſolemn an Injunction from his Maſter, began to reaſon to this Effect, "If the Woman refuſe to follow me into the Land of *Canaan*, muſt I return, and fetch thy Son to her?" The Patriarch immediately reſolves in the Negative, as no Conſideration could prevail upon him to ſuffer his Son to return to a Land, which he himſelf had left, on Account of the Inhumanity and Idolatry of its Inhabitants.

To encourage however his Servant in the Proſecution of his intended Expedition, he aſſured him, that a heavenly Meſſenger ſhould go before him, and lead to the Place from whence he ſhould bring a Wife unto his Son; but that if the Woman pitched upon, ſhould refuſe to follow him, then he would be freed from the Oath he had taken, as well deemed to have diſcharged his whole Duty.

The Servant having thus ſettled the Matter with his Maſter; ſet out with a Number of Attendants and Camels, agreeable to the Nature of his Buſineſs, and the Dignity of the Perſon who diſpatched him, travelled till he arrived at *Meſopotamia*, and then repaired to *Haran*, the City of his Maſter's Brother *Nabor*; having doubtleſs heard that *Milcah* his Maſter's Wife's Siſter, *Nabor*'s Wife had borne him ſeveral Children, one of which named *Bethuel*, had a Daughter, called REBECCA.

The Servant arriving at *Haran* in the Evening, cauſed his Camels to reſt themſelves by a Well of Water without the City, juſt about the time, when the Women uſually came out of

(*f*) The Money was weighed, becauſe at that Time no Coinage was invented.

(*g*) Current Money with the Merchant; this implies that no baſe Metal was mixed with it, nor any Artifice or Fraud uſed to impoſe on the Seller.

(*b*) A ſolemn Oath. The common Method of taking an Oath among the Hebrews, and all the Oriental Nations, agreeable to the ſacred Hiſtorian, was for the Perſon who ſwore, to put his Hand under the Thigh of the Perſon to whom he ſwore.

Veiled

the City to draw Water. Having been educated by his Maſter in the Fear of God, and being ſenſible of the Importance of the Buſineſs, in which he was employed; the Servant before he proceeded a ſingle ſtep, begs of the Almighty, Direction and Succeſs, and fearing leſt he ſhould lay Hands on any Handmaid ſuddenly, beſeeches of God to direct him by a Sign to a proper Object of Choice for his young Maſter. The deſired Sign was that ſhe, who at his Requeſt, let him drink of her Pitcher, ſhould be the Perſon appointed by God, for a Wife to his Servant *Iſaac*.

The faithful Servant had ſcarcely requeſted, when his Petition was granted; for he preſently eſpied *Rebecca*, the Daughter of *Bethuel* coming from the City, with her Pitcher upon her Shoulder to fetch Water. *Eliezer* (for that was the Servant's name) having obſerved that the Damſel was fair, and carried about her every token of Virginity, ran to her, after ſhe had filled her Pitcher at the Well, and begged a Draught of the Water ſhe had drawn.

She kindly conſented, and not only gave him to drink, but went again to the Well ſeveral Times, and filled the Trough for his Camels. When he found her Behaviour ſo exactly correſpond with the Sign he had requeſted of the Lord, he preſented her with a golden Ring, and a pair of Bracelets; aſking, at the ſame Time, whoſe Daughter ſhe was, and whether there was Room in her Father's Houſe to lodge him and his Attendants that Night.

To his great Aſtoniſhment, ſhe told him, that ſhe was the Daughter of *Bethuel*, the Son of *Nahor* by *Milcah*, aſſuring him at the ſame Time, that there was at her Father's Houſe, every neceſſary Accommodation for him and his Camels.

Eliezer, overcome with the wonderful Hand of Providence in his Favour, and deeply affected with a Senſe of God's Goodneſs, in thus directly guiding his Courſe to the Houſe of his Maſter's Brethren, in humble Acknowledgment bowed down his Head and worſhipped the Lord, ſaying, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of my Maſter* Abraham, *who hath not left deſtitute my Maſter of his Mercy and his Truth; I being in the Way, the Lord led me to the houſe of my Maſter's Brethren.* While the Servant was thus ruminating on, and acknowledging the wonderful Interpoſition of divine Providence, the Damſel haſtened home, and acquainted her Friends, with the extraordinary Circumſtance that had befallen her.

When her Brother, whoſe name was *Laban*, obſerved the Ring, and the Bracelets upon her Arms, and had heard what had paſſed at the Well, he haſtened thither with the utmoſt Speed, ſaluted the Man, and invited him home, aſſuring him, that Accommodation was prepared both for him and his Family. *Eliezer* therefore accepted the Invitation, and while they were preparing the Entertainment, he refuſed to partake of any Food, till he had recounted the Nature of his Errand, and faithfully delivered his Credentials, by telling to whom he belonged.

Hav-

Having given a general Account of his Maſter's Circumſtances and Situation, he thus proceeded, *Sarah my Maſter's Wife bare a Son to my Maſter, when ſhe was old, and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my Maſter made me ſwear, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not take a Wife to my Son of the Daughters of the* Canaanites, *in whoſe Land I dwell! But thou ſhalt go unto my Father's houſe, and to my Kindred, and take a Wife unto my Son.*

He then related a minute Account of his whole Journey; the Manner of his meeting *Rebecca*, and how remarkably the Hand of God had appeared in directing him thither, concluding thus: *And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my Maſter, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right Hand, or to the left.*

The Father and Brother of *Rebecca*, finding the immediate Hand of Providence giving a direct anſwer, referring him to *Rebecca*, who was then preſent, declaring it was God's doing; therefore ſaid they, "We ought not to ſay any thing to it: here is *Rebecca* before thee, if ſhe conſent, take her, and let her be thy Maſter's Son's Wife." The Servant having obtained the Maiden's Conſent, offered up his grateful Acknowledgment to the Lord, and having made Preſents to the Damſel, her Brother, and Mother, he, with his Men, refreſhed themſelves with what they had prepared for their Entertainment, and went to Reſt.

When the Family roſe in the Morning, he deſired them to diſpatch him back to his Maſter, being impatient to acquaint him with the Succeſs of his Journey. The Mother and Brother influenced by natural Affection, deſired that *Rebecca* might be permitted to tarry with them a few Days to take perhaps a laſt Farewell; but *Eliezer*, like a diligent and faithful Steward, would brook no Delay, but was for haſtening with her Home; which with the Maiden's Conſent, he accordingly did.

Rebecca immediately prepared for her Journey, being attended by her Nurſe *Deborah*, and left her Maid Servants, and left her Relations with this Bleſſing: *Thou art our Siſter, be thou the Mother of Thouſands of Millions, and let thy Seed poſſeſs the Gate of thoſe which hate them.* When *Eliezer* was faithfully conducting the choſen Maiden to his Maſter's Houſe, it ſo fell out, that *Iſaac* walking in the Fields to meditate on the Goodneſs of the Lord, as demonſtrated in the vegetable Creation, ſaw his Servants and Camels upon the Road, and went forward to meet them.

Rebecca ſoon eſpied him, and asked *Eliezer*, who he was, and being informed that it was his Maſter, ſhe alighted, and *(i)* veiled herſelf. *Iſaac* conducted her to his Mother's Tent, which was alloted for her Apartment, took her to Wife, and became ſo enamoured of her Charms, that he

(*i*) Veiled. According to the Cuſtom of thoſe Countries: *Veiling* was a Token of Subjection, and its Practice ſtill uſed in many Countries by the Female Sex.

Birth-

ceaſed his Grief for the Loſs of his Mother, which had now continued three Years.

Iſaac being thus happily provided with a Wife as the peculiar Gift of Providence, the antient Patriarch took *Keturah*, one of his Maids, to be his Concubinary Wife, and by her had ſix Sons, to each of whom he gave Portions in his Life-time, and then ſent them Eaſtward, that they might not ſtand in Competition with *Iſaac*, who was Free-born, for any Part of his Eſtate, nor ſettle in the Land of *Canaan*, which the Seed of *Iſaac* was to inherit.

Iſaac took *Rebecca* to Wife, when he was forty Years old, and lived twenty Years with her before he had any Iſſue, which he at length obtained by his importunate Prayer to God; for now *Rebecca* conceived.

When ſhe felt the Children ſtruggle together within her (for ſhe had Twins) ſhe was much ſtartled, and enquiring of the Lord the Cauſe, was told, *That two Nations were in her Womb, and that two Manner of People ſhould be ſeparated from her Bowels; that one of thoſe People ſhould be ſtronger than the other; and the Elder ſhould ſerve the Younger.*

When the Time of her Delivery arrived, ſhe firſt brought forth *Eſau*, who was covered with red Hair; then followed *Jacob*, whoſe Hand held *Eſau*'s Heel.

When the Boys grew up, *Eſau* became fond of Hunting; but *Jacob*, being of a Conſtitution leſs robuſt, led a more confined Life, and preferred his Tent to the airy Plain.

As *Eſau*'s Situation in Life afforded him frequent Opportunities of ſupplying his Father with Veniſon; he was eſteemed before his Brother; but *Jacob* obtained the Love of his Mother, being always near at hand, and ready to do her any Offices of Service or Honour.

When the Boys arrived at the Age of fifteen Year; their Grand-father *Abraham* departed this Life, being one hundred and ſeventy-five Years of Age, and was buried by his two Sons, *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac*, in the Cave of *Macpelah*, in the Field which he had purchaſed of *Ephron*, the Prince of the *Hittites*, and in the very Spot where *Sarah* his Wife had been buried forty Years before.

Iſhmael, *Abraham*'s eldeſt Son, tho' not his Heir, lived many Years after the Death of his Father, left behind him, as was foretold, twelve Sons; who were all Princes of Nations, and died in the hundred and ſeventh Year of his Age. Although he had been a vile Man, and his Hand had been againſt every Man, and every Man's Hand againſt him, he died a natural Death, in the Preſence of his Brethren, having his Family and Relations about him.

The two Sons of *Iſaac* being grown to Maturity, *Eſau* one Day, having greatly fatigued himſelf with hunting in the Field, came fainting Home at the very Inſtant that *Jacob* had prepared a Meſs of Pottage, compoſed of different Kinds of Vegetables, and of a red Colour. *Eſau* ſeeing the Pottages, and his Spirits ſtanding in Need of Refreſhment, deſired his Brother that he might partake of the Meſs,

urging as a Motive to perſuade him into Compliance, that he was very faint.

Jacob, though called a plain Man, evidently on this Occaſion endeavours to avail himſelf of his Brother's Neceſſity; for to inflame his Deſire the more, though greatly prompted by the keeneſs of his Appetite, as well as render *Eſau* fonder of the Bargain by Delays, he propoſes to him to ſell his *(k)* Birth-right.

Eſau, who was bent upon his Pottage, conſidered not at that Time the great and manifold Advantages of his Birth-right, and conſulting his Appetite, rather than his Reaſon, anſwers in a ſanguine, though faint Manner, *Behold, I am at the Point to die, and what ſhall this Birth-right do to me!*

Jacob finding him come to this paſs, would not part with his Pottage, till he had forced *Eſau* to aſſign over to him his Birth-right by an Oath.

Thus needy *Eſau*, without Heſitation, ſold his Birth-right, with all its appertaining Benefits, for a ſimple Meſs of Pottage, which Action the ſacred Hiſtorian calls *deſpiſing* his Birth-right, *Gen.* xxv. 34.

CHAP.

(*k*) Birth-right or Primogeniture had many and great Privileges annexed to it. The firſt born was conſecrated to the Lord, *Exod.* xxii. 29. was next in Honour and Dignity to the Parents, *Gen.* xlix. 3. had a Double Portion allotted him, *Deut.* xxi. 17. ſucceeded in the Government of the Family or Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 3. and therefore was a Matter of the higheſt Moment.

CHAP. VI.

Iſaac *removes from* Beer-ſheba *to* Gerar. *Enters into a Covenent with* Abimelech. Jacob *obtains the Bleſſing from his Father, inſtead of* Eſau. *Flees from his Brother's Revenge at the Advice of* Rebecca *his Mother.*

ISAAC took up his Abode at *Beer-ſheba*, the Reſidence of his Father *Abraham*, till a Famine which happened in that Country, obliged him to remove.

While he was ruminating with himſelf which Way to proceed, the Lord in a Viſion charged him by no Means to go into *Egypt*, but purſue the divine Direction, aſſuring him on thoſe Terms of his peculiar Favour and Bleſſing, and that in his Deſcendants he would punctually fulfil the Oath he had ſworn to his Father *Abraham*, by cauſing his Family to increaſe and multiply, and making them the inſtruments of conveying the moſt important Good to Mankind.

According to God's Command, *Iſaac* directed his Courſe to the Country of the *Philiſtines*, and fixed his Habitation in *Gerar*, whither on his arrival he uſed the ſame Stratagem as his Father had done in *Egypt*, and from the ſame Motive; for, fearing that the Charms of his Wife *Rebecca*

Upon

might captivate the Men of that Country, and thereby endanger his Safety, he cauſed her to paſs for his Siſter, a Title very common in thoſe Days among Kindred of every Degree. But the Diſguiſe was ſoon detected, for *Abimelech* (that is the King) had obſerved ſuch Freedoms between them, as inclined him to think, there could be no other Connection than that of Man and Wife. He therefore ſent for *Iſaac*, and ſeverely reprimanded him for endeavouring to impoſe upon the People, confidently averring from what he had ſeen that ſhe was his Wife.

Iſaac thus convicted, attempted not to diſprove the Charge, but urged in Vindication of his Conduct, that he did it to ſave his Life: nevertheleſs the King blamed him for laying a Temptation before him and his people, ſaying, *What is this thou haſt done unto us? one of the People might lightly have lain with thy Wife, and thou ſhouldeſt have brought guiltineſs upon us.* He then gave the ſtricteſt Charge to his People in general, to avoid giving the leaſt Offence either to him or to his Wife.

Having received theſe Tokens of the Royal Sanction and Patronage, *Iſaac* applied himſelf to Huſbandry, in which it pleaſed God to render him remarkably ſucceſsful; inſomuch that in proceſs of Time, he became ſo wealthy and powerful, as to excite the envy of the principal Inhabitants of *Gerar*. The Succeſs of *Iſaac* however was ſoon the Cauſe of his Departure; for the King's Attendants and Favourites, in order to give him Offence, ordered the Wells to be filled up, that his Father's Servants had digged; which together with the Advice of the King, who was not free from Jealouſy on his Account, determined him to withdraw to ſome other Place. To avoid every Cauſe of Suſpicion in the King, as well as ſecure his Property, *Iſaac* withdrew to the Valley of *Gerar*, and immediately employed his Servants in digging the Wells, which the *Philiſtins* had filled up; and when finiſhed, called them by the ſame Names as his Father had given them. In the courſe of their Labour, the Servants diſcovered a new Well of fine ſpringing Water; but a Diſpute ariſing between ſome neighbouring Herdſmen, and *Iſaac*'s People; the Former claiming the Well as found upon their Ground; the Latter at the Command of their Maſter quitted it; but call it *Eſek*, or Contention, to perpetuate the Quarrel, which was occaſioned by its Diſcovery. *Iſaac*'s Servants then digged another Well, which alſo excited Contention, and was therefore called *Sitnah*, or Hatred.

Diſapproving a Situation amongſt ſuch contentious and envious People, the Patriarch removed from amongſt them, and digged another Well, of which he kept peaceable Poſſeſſion, and therefore called, it *Rehobath*, or free Space, becauſe his Flock had now Room to feed at large, and range the Country in ſearch of the beſt Paſture: *for now*, ſaid he, *the Lord hath made Room for us*, and we ſhall be fruitful in the Land.

But

But *Iſaac* dwelt not long upon this Spot; for he ſoon returned to *Beer-ſheba*, where on the very Night of his arrival, it pleaſed God to renew the Promiſe he had made to him and his Seed for the Sake of faithful *Abraham*: in grateful Acknowledgment of which repeated inſtance of the Divine Goodneſs, he built an Altar there, called upon the Name of the Lord, and determining with God's Bleſſing to tarry there ſome Time, ordered his Servants to dig a Well; Water in thoſe dry and hot Countries being a very valuable Commodity. *Iſaac* had not long reſided here, before *Abimelech*, touched with a Senſe of the Injury he had done him, and the unworthy Treatment he had received from his Servants, as well as fearing his juſt and powerful Reſentment, thought it moſt prudent to avoid future Trouble, by endeavouring to bring him into a League of Friendſhip with him; taking therefore with him, two of his chief Friends and Subjects, he went to *Iſaac* to *Beer-ſheba*, in order to pay him Reſpect and Honour.

To remind the King that he ſtill retained a Senſe of the Injuries he had formerly done him, the Patriarch received his Viſit but coolly, demanding of him the Cauſe of viſiting a Perſon to whom by his Conduct and Behaviour he had long diſcovered an Averſion?

Abimelech, conſcious of his Error, and deſirous of avoiding the Reſentment of the Patriarch, told him, that the Cauſe of deſiring to be on Terms of Friendſhip with him, aroſe from a certain Aſſurance, that the Lord had undertaken to aſſert his Right: aſſuring him at the ſame Time, that he had retained an Eſteem for him, and concluding his Addreſs, with a very honourable Appellation; *thou art now the bleſſed of the Lord.*

Iſaac being of a peaceable Diſpoſition, entertained *Abimelech* and his Attendants with great Liberality; and the enſuing Morning, the King and the Patriarch entered into a Covenant of Friendſhip, ratified the ſame by a ſolemn and mutual Oath, and they parted from each other with much Peace and Reſpect. *Iſaac* had no ſooner diſmiſſed *Abimelech* than his Servant came and informed him, that they had found Water, upon which he called it *Sheba*.

A Circumſtance now happened which ſorely grieved the Patriarch and his Wife *Rebecca*: *Eſau* who had long diſcovered a perverſe and obſtinate Temper; at the Age of forty Years, took two Wives *Judith* and *Beſhemath*, from among the Daughters of the *Hittites*; tho' he could not but be ſenſible of the Caution his pious Grandfather always to took prevent his Father from marrying into that idolatrous Family: Yet ſuch was the Power of natural Affection with *Iſaac*, that ſwayed by an over Fondneſs for a diſobedient and rebellious Son, he would have preferred the Order of Nature to the Will of God, who had expreſsly declared before *Eſau* and *Jacob* were born, that the Elder ſhould ſerve the Younger; but Providence diſappointed his Purpoſes, in order to promote its own wiſe and gracious Deſigns.

Being

Being now an Hundred and thirty-ſeven Years old, he called to him his Son *Eſau*, for whom he always entertained a partial Regard, and reminding him of his advanced Years, and the Uncertainty of his Life, deſired him to take his Bow and Quiver, kill ſome Veniſon, and make him ſavory Meat, that his Spirits might be refreſhed, and his Mind properly diſpoſed for giving him that ſolemn Bleſſing, which pious Parents in thoſe Days always beſtowed upon their Children, and which was held ſacred, as a Preſage of their future Proſperity.

Rebecca overheard what had paſſed between *Eſau* and his Father, who ſhe well knew preferred him to *Jacob*; and determined if poſſible to deprive him of the intended Bleſſing, and by Stratagem cauſe it to be pronounced on her youngeſt Son. To effect this, ſhe called *Jacob*, acquainted him with the Deſign of his Father to pronounce his ſolemn Bleſſing on his Brother, and having enjoined him to a punctual Obedience to whatever ſhe ſhould command, bade him go immediately to the Flock, and fetch from thence two Kids of the Goats, and with them ſaid ſhe, *I will make ſavoury Meat for thy Father, ſuch as he loveth; and thou ſhalt bring it to thy Father, that he may eat, and that he may bleſs thee before his Death.*

The upright Youth, heſitates to comply with his Mother's Injunction, leſt his Father ſhould detect his Deſign, and inſtead of a Bleſſing, ſhould pronounce upon him a Curſe. His Reluctance was increaſed by this additional Reflection; that as *Eſau* was remarkably hairy, and he remarkable ſmooth, his Father to ſupply the Defect of Sight might handle him, and thereby diſcover the Cheat: He therefore mentioned this Circumſtance as a farther Ground of Objection; but his Mother determined on her Purpoſes, takes upon herſelf whatever might reſult from the ſame, *(l) upon me be thy Curſe my Son, only obey my Voice and go fetch me them.*

At length aſſured of his Mother's extraordinary Affection for him, he delayed not, but went immediately and brought the Kids, of which his Mother made ſavoury Meat, ſuch as ſhe knew her Huſband loved. The Food thus prepared, ſhe put upon *Jacob*, *Eſau*'s beſt Attire, and covered his Hands and Neck with the Skins of

(*l*) Upon me, &c. *Rebecca* ſeems to have been perſuaded, that *Jacob* had a juſt Title to the firſt Bleſſing, which *Eſau* had ſold with his Birth-Right, and which God had deſigned for *Jacob* from the Beginning; whence ſhe thought it her Duty to deceive *Iſaac* into an Action, which he ought to have done voluntarily, and therefore takes the whole Curſe upon herſelf, provided *Iſaac* ſhould diſcover the Fallacy. But though theſe Circumſtances have a great Tendency to palliate the Guilt both of *Jacob* and his Mother; yet they are not ſufficient to excuſe them, the former having increaſed his Crime by affirming an abſolute Lye, *I am Eſau the firſt born*, &c. We ſhould upon the whole lament the Frailty of human Nature, which is ever liable to err, and at the ſame Time admire the Impartiality of the ſacred Writings in which the very Blemiſhes and Tranſgreſſions of thoſe who make the greateſt Figure therein, are recorded for our Inſtruction.

the Kids, and preſenting him with the ſavoury Meat, ſent him with it to his Father *Iſaac*. As ſoon as he entered, the good old Man, enquired of him who he was? *Jacob* replied, I am *Eſau* thy (*m*) Firſt-born; I have punctually obeyed your Command, ariſe, and eat of my Veniſon that thy Soul may bleſs me." The old Man ſurpriſed at the Haſte with which his Deſire was executed, enquired of him how it came to paſs that he found the Veniſon ſo quickly? *Jacob* replied, becauſe the Lord brought it to me; but ſtill *Iſaac* diffident of his perſon, deſired him to approach, that he might feel and thereby be aſſured whether or not he was really and verily his Son *Eſau*.

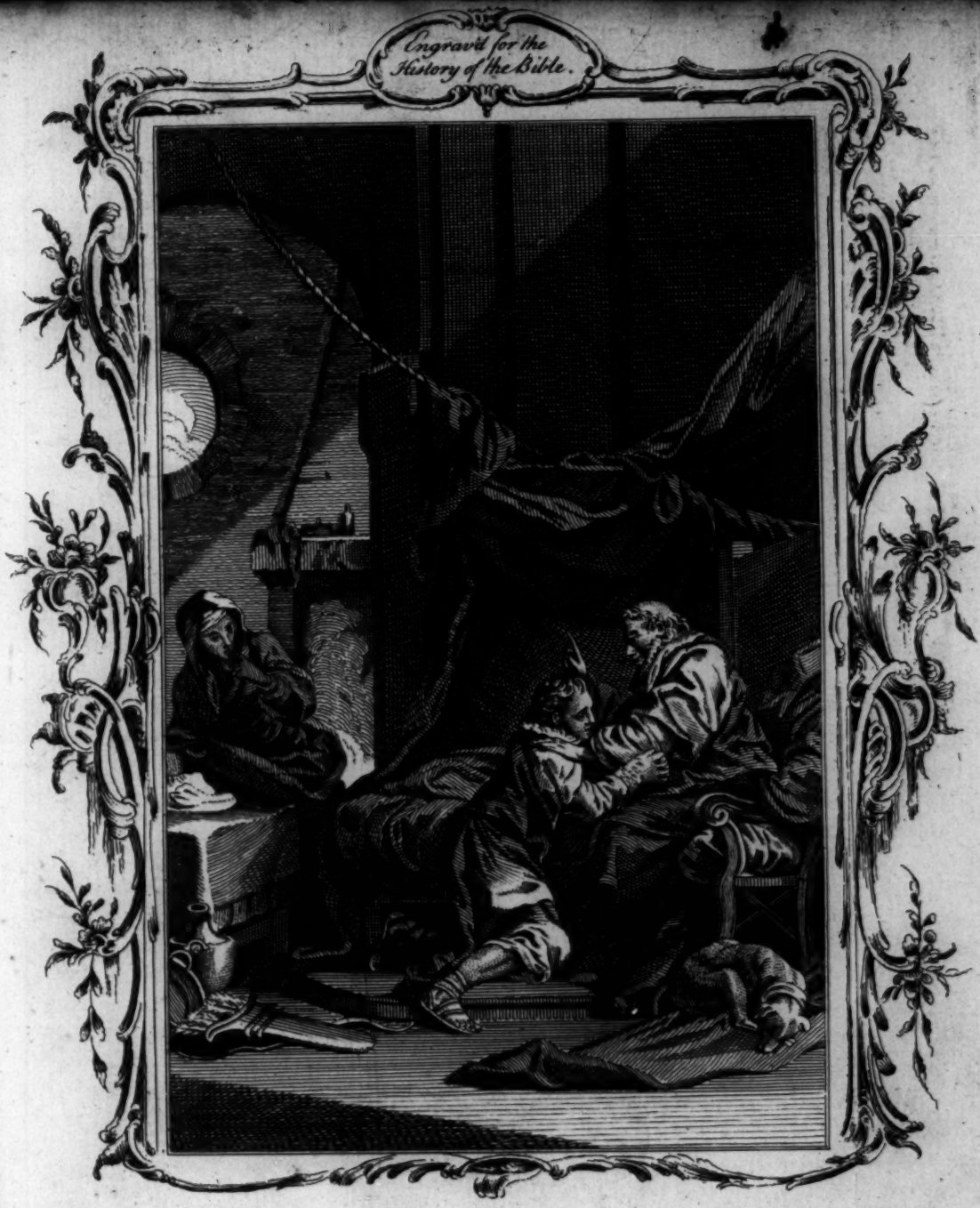
Jacob accordingly came near, and his aged Father when he had felt his Hands, which were covered with the Skin of a Kid; could not determine whether it was *Eſau* or *Jacob*, diſcovering his doubt in theſe Words. "The Voice is *Jacob's* Voice, but the Hands are the Hands of *Eſau*." At length however, being obliged to rely on the Veracity of his Son, he put the Queſtion to him more ſtrongly; *Art thou my very Son Eſau? Jacob* anſwered as falſely as readily, *I am*; and the good old Man being now ſatisfied that he was indeed his Son *Eſau*, bid him bring the Veniſon, that he might eat thereof, and bleſs him.

The ſavoury Meat was accordingly brought, and *Iſaac* having eat thereof, and drank of the Wine, with which his Son furniſhed him, called him to come near and kiſs him, which when *Jacob* had done, he bleſſed him in theſe Words, *See the Smell of my Son is as the Smell of a Field, which the Lord hath bleſſed: Therefore God give thee of the* (*n*) *Dew of Heaven and the Fatneſs of the Earth, and Plenty of Corn and Wine. Let People ſerve thee and Nations bow down to thee; be Lord over thy Brethren, and let thy Mothers Sons bow down to thee. Curſed be every one that curſeth thee, and bleſſed be he that bleſſeth thee.* *Jacob* had no ſooner received the Bleſſing from his Father and was gone from his Preſence, than *Eſau* came in, bringing the Veniſon prepared for him to eat, and ſaying, *Let my Father ariſe and eat of his Son's Veniſon, that thy Soul may bleſs me.* *Iſaac* confounded at the Circumſtance, haſtily aſked, who he was? and when *Eſau* replied, that he was his Son, even his Firſt-born *Eſau*; he was ſeized with a ſudden Trembling, and with aſtoniſhed Countenance, aſked, *Who and where was he*, that had brought Veniſon into him, of which he had eaten before he came, and bleſ-

(*m*) Firſt born. Some Commentators ſuppoſe that *Jacob* meant, that he repreſented or ſtood in the Place of *Eſau* the Firſt born, by Virtue of the Purchaſe he had made of the Primogeniture or Birth-right of his Brother. But this is offered as mere Opinion.

(*n*) Dew, &c. In thoſe hot Countries, Showers being leſs frequent than with us, the Morning and Evening Dews were of the utmoſt Importance to refreſh the Earth, and produce that Plenty for which the Country was ſo remarkable.

ſed



ISAAC *blessing* JACOB, Gen: XXVII.

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fed him; and to give a farther Sanction to the Tranſaction, he added, *yea, and he ſhall be bleſſed.* When the diſappointed *Eſau* heard theſe Words of his Father, he exclaimed in the bitterneſs of his Soul, *Bleſs me, even me alſo, O my Father.* His Father in excuſe told him, that his Brother by a Stratagem had got the Bleſſing from him.

Eſau then remonſtrated on the Injuſtice of the Proceeding, having firſt taken away his Birth-right, and then the Bleſſing of his Father; but pathetically asked, if he had not in Reſerve a Bleſſing for him; repeating the importunate Requeſt, *Bleſs me, even me, alſo, O my Father,* and wept moſt bitterly.

The good old Man moved with Compaſſion for his unhappy Son, in order to appeaſe his troubled Mind a little, ſaid to him, *Behold thy Dwelling ſhall be the Fatneſs of the Earth, and of the Dew of Heaven from above; and by thy Sword ſhalt thou live, and ſhalt ſerve thy Brother, and it ſhall come to paſs, when thou ſhalt have the Dominion, that thou ſhalt break his Yoke from off thy Neck.* But this Addreſs availed not, for *Eſau* conceived a moſt implacable hatred againſt his Brother *Jacob*, for depriving him of the important Bleſſing, and determined as ſoon as his Father ſhould die, to ſlay him.

Rebecca being informed of *Eſau*'s deſperate Reſolution on the Life of her beloved *Jacob*, acquainted him with the horrid Deſign, and adviſed him to betake him haſtily to her Brother *Laban* at *Haran*, and there remain till his Brother's Fury might be ſomewhat abated, aſſuring him that ſhe would particularly obſerve the ſame, and ſend him Word when he might return with ſafety. *Jacob*, who ever liſtened to, and obeyed the Counſel of his Mother, was ready to comply with her Propoſal, but was not willing to depart before he had obtained his Father's Conſent, which in this Caſe, he much doubted of effecting. To remove this Difficulty therefore, *Rebecca* artfully complained of the Concern, under which ſhe laboured on Account of *Eſau*'s taking Wives from among the Daughters of the *Hittites*, inſinuating her Fear, leſt *Jacob* ſhould follow his Example. Though *Iſaac* underſtood not the Drift of this Complaint, yet being a pious Man, and knowing that the Promiſe made to his Father *Abraham*, and renewed to him, was to be fulfilled in *Jacob*'s Iſſue; and being very anxious that he might not corrupt his Blood by intermarrying with Idolators, whom God would deſtroy, called *Jacob* to him, and with his Bleſſing laid on him a moſt ſolemn Injunction, that he ſhould not take a Wife of the Daughters of *Canaan*, but go to *Pandam-aram*, to the Houſe of *Bethuel*, his Mother's Father, and take from them a Wife of the Daughters of *Laban*, his Mother's Brother; and farther to encourage him, pronounces his Bleſſing, *God Almighty bleſs thee, and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayſt be a Multitude of People; and give thee the Bleſſing of Abraham to thee and to thy Seed with thee, that thou mayſt inherit the Land wherein thou art a Stranger, which God gave unto* Abraham. *Iſaac* then diſpatched away

away his Son *Jacob*, and he went to *Pandam-aram*, unto *Laban*, according to his Father's Directions.

CHAP. VII.

Jacob's *Viſions and Vow.* Jacob *is entertained by* Laban. *Covenanteth for* Rachel; *is deceived with* Leah, *but at length marries* Rachel *alſo.* Rachel *is concerned on Account of her Barrenneſs, and at length bleſſed with a Son, whom ſhe called* Joſeph. Jacob *enters into a new Covenant with* Laban; *by a Scheme becomes very rich. Departs from* Laban, *is purſued, and taken*; *enters in a freſh Covenant with* Laban.

THE diſappointed *Eſau* finding that his Father had again bleſſed his Brother *Jacob*, and diſpatched him to *Pandam-aram*, with the moſt ſolemn Injunction, nor to marry with any of the Daughters of *Canaan*, and that *Jacob*, in Obedience to his Father's Command, was departed, could not but reflect on his own Conduct in taking thoſe *Hittite* Wives. To reinſtate himſelf therefore, if poſſible, in the Favour of his Father, he went and took to Wife *Mahalath*, his Uncle *Iſhmael*'s Daughter; but this produced not the deſired Effect.

Jacob departing from *Beer-ſheba*, proceeded towards *Haran*; but Night overtaking him, he took up his Lodging in the (*o*) open Air, having the Sky for his Covering, and Stones for his Pillow. While he ſlept, he dreamed, that he ſaw a Ladder ſet upon the Earth, the Top of which reached to Heaven, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon it. Above this Ladder ſtood the Lord, who thus beſpoke him; *I am the God of* Abraham *thy Father, and the God of* Iſaac: *the Land whereon thou lieſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed*; *and thy Seed ſhall be as the Duſt of the Earth, and thou ſhalt ſpread abroad to the Weſt, and to the Eaſt, and to the North, and to the South*; *and in thee, and in thy Seed, ſhall all the Families of the Earth be bleſſed.*

Jacob was ſo affected with this Dream, that when he awoke, he exclaimed; *(p) Surely the Lord is in this Place, and I knew it not!*

As this is the firſt Account in ſacred Hiſtory of God's immediately appearing to *Jacob*, there is Reaſon to think it was the firſt Time; for we find it ſtruck him with a religious Awe, and he ſaid, in a holy Rapture; *How*

(*o*) So exact was *Jacob* in obſerving the Command of his Father, that he would not enter any houſe that belonged to a *Canaanite*, but choſe rather to ſleep in the open Air.

(*p*) Surely the Lord, &c. We are by no Means to infer from this exclamation, that *Jacob* had ſuch contracted Notions of the omnipreſent Jehovah, as to imagine that he was not preſent throughout, yea, beyond all Space. The meaning therefore is plainly this, that he could not have imagined before, that the Lord would have choſen that Spot to manifeſt his peculiar and glorious Preſence. This Senſe is confirmed by ſeveral of the ancient Verſions, and particularly the *Chaldee*.

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JACOB meets RACHEL. Gen. 29. 10.

dreadful is this Place! This is the Houſe of God, the Gate of Heaven!

When *Jacob* aroſe from his airy Couch, he took the chief Stone on which he had lain his Head, and ſet it up as a Monument of God's Loving-Kindneſs towards him, in confirming ſo ſolemnly the Promiſes made to his Fathers; and as a Mark to diſtinguiſh the very Spot, to thoſe who might travel that Way.

Having ſet up the Stone, he poured (*q*) Oil upon it, and in Token of ſo remarkable a Diſplay of divine Love, changed the Name of the Place from *Luz* to (*r*) *Bethel*.

Before he departed from this memorable Spot, he repeated in a moſt ſolemn Manner Part of the divine Promiſe; and in order to bind himſelf more ſtrongly to the Service of God, made a Vow, ſaying to this Purport, "If God will be with me, and direct me in my Journey, and will give me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, ſo that I return to my Father's Houſe in Peace, then ſhall the Lord be my God: and this Stone which I have ſet up as a Pillar, ſhall be God's Houſe: and of all that thou ſhalt give me, I will ſurely give the Tenth unto thee."

The pious Traveller having performed a ſolemn Vow unto the Lord, proceeded on his Journey, till he came to the Well of *Haran*, near which lay ſeveral Flocks of Sheep. He then enquired of the Shepherds, if they knew *Laban*, the Son of *Nahor*? and was informed they did; and that *Rachel* his Daughter approached with her Flock, to water at the Well.

During his Diſcourſe with the Shepherds, the Damſel arrived with her fleecy Care, and *Jacob*, as a Token of Reſpect, rolled away the Stone from the Mouth of the Well, and watered the Sheep in her Stead; which done, he kiſſed her, wept for Joy, and told her who he was.

Rachel left *Jacob* at the Well, and haſtened to acquaint her Father with what had happened. The good old Man overjoyed at the arrival of his Siſter's Son ran out to meet him, and having moſt cordially embraced him, conducted him to his Houſe.

On their arrival at *Laban's* Houſe *Jacob* recounted the Occaſion of his coming from Home, and ſome of the Incidents that happened in the Way, inſomuch that his Uncle was convinced he left not his Parents for any Miſdemeanor on his Part, but ſtrict Obedience to their Will and Pleaſure, though he travelled without any Attendants.

Laban, finding from his Account that he was under the immediate Care and Protection of Providence, acknowledged him as his near Relative, and kindly entertained him; but *Jacob* unaccuſtomed to an inactive Life, entered himſelf in the Buſineſs of his Occupa-

(*q*) Oil, &c. We find from ſeveral ancient Writers that this Ceremony was uſed in conſecrating things to a divine Uſe; and that among the Heathens every Stone that had received this Rite, was eſteemed as divine and honoured with Adoration.

(*r*) *Bethel*, that is the Houſe of God, from BETH, a Houſe, and EL, God.

tion, which when *Laban* had obſerved, he acquainted him that he by no means deſired his Service for nought, and inſiſted on his mentioning his own Terms.

Rachel, the beautiful and virtuous *(s)* Shepherdeſs, had already captivated his Heart, and he propoſed her as the Reward of ſeven Years Service. *Laban* immediately conſented to the Propoſal, and *Jacob* entered on his Service moſt chearfully, having an Eye to the Reward, which in his Judgment was ineſtimable.

His Affection for *Rachel* ſweetened the Servitude, as well as rendered the Time apparently ſhort; and when it was expired, *Jacob* demanded *Rachel* to Wife. *Laban* on the Occaſion, invited all his Friends and Neighbours to the ſolemnization of the Nuptials; but deſirous of retaining *Jacob* in his Service, he treated him very unfairly; for in the Evening he took *Leah* his other Daughter, and brought her to *Jacob's (t)* Bed, inſtead of *Rachel*, to whom he was contracted.

When *Jacob* diſcovered the Deceit *(u)* in the Morning, he expoſtulated with *Laban* on the Injuſtice of his Treatment; but his Uncle waved the Affair, by obſerving, that it was not the Cuſtom of the Country, to give the Younger in Marriage before the Elder. Though this Excuſe was ſo trifling, *Laban*, who had obſerved *Jacob's* Fondneſs for *Rachel*, knew he could bring him to any Terms, and therefore demanded the ſame Courſe of Service for his young Daughter; and as he had the utmoſt Reaſon to apprehend that *Jacob* in Reſentment of the Fraud would diſcard *Leah*, he entreated him to fulfill her Week, promiſing on thoſe Terms, to give him her alſo in Marriage. *Jacob* complied with the Propoſal, and then married *Rachel* of whom being paſſionately fond he ſlighted *Leah*. But God compaſſionating the Caſe of *Leah*, opened her Womb, and reſtrained *Rachel* from Child-bearing, inſomuch that the Former bare four Sons before the Latter even conceived. The Fruitfulneſs of her Siſter excited the envy of *Rachel* who in proceſs of Time broke off all Family Connection and became averſe to the very Sight of *Leah*.

Such was her Concern for her barrenneſs that it bewildered her Imagination, and in very opprobrious Terms, ſhe vented her Rage upon her Huſband; *Give me children, or elſe I die*; but *Jacob* checked ſuch an inordinate ſally of Temper in a Manner becoming a perſon of Prudence and Piety; in this

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(s) Shepherdeſs. This innocent and uſeful Employ, in thoſe early Ages, was reputed no Diſgrace: the greateſt Heroes of Antiquity, the Sons of Kings, and Kings themſelves are repreſented as engaged in the ſame, which was then as honourable as it is now deſpicable.

(t) It was cuſtomary in that Country, for the Bride as an Emblem of Modeſty to be covered with a Veil, when ſhe was brought to the Bridegroom: by this Means doubtleſs *Jacob* was impoſed on by *Laban*, and could not diſcern that it was *Leah*, till the next Morning.

(u) It is not a little remarkable, that *Jacob*, who deprived *Eſau*, of the Bleſſing his Father intended him by Frand, loſt what he eſteemed an invaluable Bleſſing, by Fraud likewiſe.

The

ſhort, though ſtinging Reproof, *Am I in God's Stead, who hath withheld from thee the Fruit of the Womb?*

Rachel, thus convinced of her Folly and Raſhneſs, propoſed a Method to ſupply this Defect in herſelf; this was the Stratagem purſued by her Grandmother *Sarah*, for having adviſed concerning the Matter with her Husband, ſhe gave him her Handmaid *Bilhah* as a Concubinary Wife, thinking to eſteem and cheriſh as her own, the Children which *Jacob* might have by her Maid. *Rachel* therefore according to her Deſign, when *Bilhah* bore *Jacob* a Son, claimed him as her own, and called him *Dan*, as ſhe did alſo a ſecond, whom ſhe named *Naphtali*.

But this Artifice of *Rachel* to ſecure her Husband's Love was counteracted by *Leah*, who likewiſe gave one of her Maid's to *Jacob*, and when ſhe bore him a Son, called his Name GAD or a *Troop*, as ſhe did a ſecond *Aſher* or *bleſſed*. By this Time *Reuben*, *Leah*'s eldeſt Son by *Jacob*, was arrived at Years ſufficient to be truſted by himſelf, and wandering one Day in the Fields, he found ſome extraordinary (*w*) Flowers, which he brought Home and preſented to his Mother.

Rachel was captivated with the Sight of them, and deſired her Siſter to give her Part; but *Leah* likewiſe envying *Rachel* from a Suſpicion that ſhe ſhared too largely in her Husband's Affection, churliſhly anſwered her Requeſt; *Is it a ſmall Matter that thou haſt taken my Husband, but you muſt take my Son's Flowers too?* *Rachel* having a peculiar Inclination to the Flowers, waved all harſh Reply, and endeavouring to win her over to her Will by mild and gentle Meaſures, propoſed, if ſhe would give her ſome of the Flowers, that ſhe ſhould enjoy her Husband's Company that Night, though in the Courſe of Things, he was then to be the Conſort of *Rachel*.

Leah approved of the Propoſal, and the Agreement was accordingly made; but to make ſure of the Bargain, ſhe ſent out to meet *Jacob* on his Return from the Field, and having told him the Contract between herſelf and *Rachel* enjoyed his Company that night. Tho' he now thought ſhe was paſt Childbearing, ſhe conceived once more, and brought forth her fifth Son, whom ſhe called *Iſſachar*, becauſe he was the Product of her Hire.

Leah conceived again, and bare a ſixth Son, whom ſhe called *Zebulon*; and at length ſhe bare to *Jacob* the only Daughter of whom we read whoſe Name was *Dinah*.

Rachel had long lamented in Bitterneſs of Soul her Want of Iſſue: but at length it pleaſed God, in his infinite Goodneſs, to hearken to her Petition,

(*w*) The learned in general are of Opinion, that our Tranſlation errs in rendering the *Hebrew* Word, DODAIM, Mandrakes; it being well known that the Mandrakes has a very ſtrong ſtupifying ſmell, and nothing inviting either in Taſte or Colour, to induce a Child like *Reuben* to pluck it. Beſide the time in which they were gathered, proves that it could not have been the Mandrake, becauſe the Wheat Harveſt, in thoſe hot Countries is in *May*, and the Fruit of this Plant is not ripe till *September*. The Word may be rendered *deſirable Flowers*, for it ſignifies Lover in the Dual Number, and conveys an Idea of Delight.

grant her earneſt Deſire, and bleſs her with a Son. Rejoicing that God had taken away her (*x*) Reproach, and foretelling, that the Lord would beſtow on her another Son, ſhe called her Firſt-born *Joſeph*,

Soon after the Birth of *Joſeph*, the appointed Time of *Jacob*'s Servitude being expired, he began to grow deſirous of returning to his own Country; and therefore reminding *Laban*, that he had fulfilled his Contract, he deſired him to deliver his Wives and Children, for whom he had ſerved him, that he might go to the Habitation of his Father.

Laban, ſenſible of the vaſt Importance of *Jacob's* Continuance with him, endeavoured to divert him from all Deſire of leaving him, by aſſuring him, that ſince he was with him, he had received many peculiar Tokens of the divine Bleſſing; and offering him whatever Terms he ſhould propoſe. But all his Endeavours to keep *Jacob* in his Service were in vain; he well knew, nor failed to tell him, that thro' the Bleſſing of God on his honeſt and faithful Labours; he had increaſed his little Herd to a Multitude; reminding him at the ſame Time, that it was abſolutely neceſſary he ſhould act for himſelf, and make Proviſion for his own Family, which was become numerous.

Laban, ſtill deſirous of retaining him, preſſed him hard, and once more offered him his own Terms.

Jacob would accept of no ſtated Wages, but propoſed theſe Conditions: That they ſhould paſs thro' the whole Flock of Sheep and Goots, and having ſeperated all the ſpeckled Cattle from the white, the former ſhould be committed to the Care of *Laban*'s Sons, and the Latter to the Care of *Jacob*; then whatſoever ſpotted or brown Cattle ſhould be produced out of the white Flock, which he was to keep, ſhould be his Wages.

Laban immediately conſented to the Propoſal; the Flocks were accordingly ſeparated; and the ſpotted Cattle were delivered into the Cuſtody of *Laban*, while the reſt were committed to the Care of *Jacob*; and to prevent any Intercourſe between them, they were ſet three Days Journey apart.

The Flocks being thus ſeparated and committed to the Care of their reſpective Keepers: *Jacob*, by the Aſſiſtance of the divine Wiſdom, purſued a very extraordinary Method to improve his own Stock and at the ſame Time leſſen that of *Laban*. He took Rods or Twigs off the green Poplar, Hazel, and Cheſnut-Trees, and ſtripping off Part of the Rinds in Strakes, cauſed ſome of the White to appear on the Twigs: theſe Twigs he placed in the watering Troughs, when the Cattle came to drink, at the Time in which they uſually engender; that ſeeing the ſpeckled Twigs they might conceive, and bring forth ſpeckled Cattle. He alſo took particular Care

(*x*) Reproach. As Fruitfulneſs was then accounted a great Bleſſing from that God, who ſaid, *Increaſe and Multiply*, ſo Barreneſs was accounted a Reproach or Curſe.

The

to place the Twigs before the fatteſt and moſt healthy Cattle; and alſo to avoid putting any before thoſe that were weak and ſickly, by which wiſe Proceedure he not only obtained for himſelf the greater Number, but the choiceſt and moſt valuable.

Thus, in a ſhort Time, through the Bleſſing of God, *Jacob* became exceedingly rich and powerful; but the extraordinary Increaſe of his Propriety expoſed him to the Envy of *Laban*'s Sons, and even of *Laban* himſelf, inſomuch that they were continually murmuring againſt him, becauſe he had raiſed himſelf to a good Eſtate out of their Fortunes.

Jacob having obſerved *Laban*'s Coolneſs and Indifference towards him, began to think of leaving him, and return to his Father's Houſe, which deſign he was ſhortly commanded by God, in a Viſion, to put into Execution.

He therefore ſent to his Wives in the Field, where he kept his Flock, in order to conſult with them, and gain their Conſent to go with him. When they came, he laid before them the whole of his Purpoſe, telling them, he obſerved their Father of late had treated him with grant Coolneſs and Indifference, and even ſometimes with Marks of Diſpleaſure, though he knew no juſt Cauſe for ſuch Behaviour. He alſo took Occaſion to appeal to them concerning his Induſtry and Fidelity, and the Injuſtice of their Father toward him, firſt, in deceiving him, and afterwards changing his Wages ſo often; and then obſerved to them, that God had turned all their Father's Devices to his Advantage, and had taken away his Cattle, and given them unto him. Then he acquainted them, that the Lord had appeared unto him in a Dream, reminding him of the ſolemn Vow he had made at *Bethel*, in his Paſſage thither, and commanded him to return to the land of his Fathers.

His Wives having attentively liſtened to all that he ſaid, agreed with his Opinion concerning their Father, conſented to go with him, and deſired him to perform whatſoever God had commanded.

Jacob immediately prepared for his Journey, ſet his Wives and Children upon Camels, and proceeded with all his Cattle and Goods, taking the Advantage of the Abſence of *Laban*, who was gone to ſhear his Sheep; which likewiſe gave *Rachel* on Opportunity of ſtealing and carrying off her Father's *(y)* Images.

Jacob paſſed the River *Euphrates*

(y) The *Hebrew* Word *Teraphim*, ſignifies Idols as appears from *Gen.* xxxi. 30. where they are termed *Elohai* or Gods. It is alſo evident from 1 *Sam.* xix. 13, that they were of human Form; for the very Word is uſed, for the Image which Michal put into *David*'s Bed. Theſe Images they conſulted as Oracles concerning Things unknown for the preſent or future. Some think that *Rachel* ſtole them, to prevent her Father from diſcovering her Flight by conſulting them, while others are of Opinion that it was to ſecure ſomething that might appeaſe her Father's Anger, if he ſhould overtake them in their Flight. But theſe are at beſt, but Conjecture; tho' we have too much Ground to think that our Forefathers were tainted with this Kind of Idolatry.

and made towards *Mount Gilead*, and though it was three Days before *Laban* knew of his Departure, yet in ſeven Days he overtook him upon the Mount.

There is the utmoſt Reaſon to think that *Laban* purſued him with a Mind bent upon Revenge; but the Lord, mindful of the Welfare of his Servant, charged him moſt ſolemnly not even to hurt him by Word; therefore, when he and his Kindred came up with *Jacob*, he only expoſtulated with him on the Want of Reſpect he diſcovered in ſtealing away his Daughters, and thereby preventing them from taking Leave of him as became his Children, or departing in a Manner agreeable to their Rank and Dignity. He added, that ſuch a Conduct might have expoſed him to his moſt ſevere Reſentment, and that he might have ſuſtained much Injury from him, who was by far the moſt powerful; nay, he abſolutely hinted to him, that he would have purſued Meaſures of Revenge, had he not been diverted therefrom by the awful Prohibition of God himſelf.

Nor did he only upbraid him with Want of Duty and Affection, but even charged him with Theft, ſaying, *And now tho' thou wouldeſt needs be gone, becauſe thou ſore longeſt after thy Father's Houſe; yet, wherefore haſt thou ſtolen my (z) Gods?*

Jacob urged as an Excuſe for his abrupt Departure, his Fear, leſt if he had acquainted him with the Deſign, he would have prevented its Accompliſhment, by detaining his Daughters by Force; but ſomewhat warmed with the Charge of theft (not knowing that *Rachel* had ſtolen the Images) he vehemently exclaim'd, *With whomſoever thou findeſt thy Gods, let him not live!* And farther, to aſſert his Innocence, he calls upon him to ſearch his Goods before all that were preſent, and to retain whatever of his Property he ſhould find upon him.

Laban then proceeded to ſearch, and having ranſacked the Tents of *Jacob*, *Leah*, and her two Handmaids, he went into the Tent of *Rachel*, who conſcious of her Crime, and fearful of the Anger, both of her Father and Huſband upon Detection, had juſt concealed the Images in the Camel's Furniture, and ſat down upon them.

Having uſed this Precaution, when her Father entered her Tent, ſhe pleaded as an Excuſe for not riſing to ſalute him, that the Cuſtom of Women was then upon her, and *Laban* out of Modeſty omitted ſearching that Place, where alone the Images were to be found.

Thus baffled by the Cunning of his Daughter, after a long Search he could not find what he had ſo induſtriouſly ſought, and was therefore very ſeverely reprimanded by *Jacob*, who not only reproached him with a moſt unjuſt Suſpicion, but appealed to his own Friends to decide the Caſe betwixt

(z) Gods. This is the very Word, which before is rendered Images, and therefore juſtifies our former Remark, concerning the Idolatry, even of his enlightened People.

Hoſt,

them. Then recounting the long Service he had done him, during a Number of Years, concluded his upbraiding Addreſs in Words to this Purport, "Except the God of my Fathers had been with me, ſurely thou hadſt ſent me away empty. But God hath ſeen my Affliction, and the Labour of mine Hands, and rebuked thee Yeſternight."

Laban, conſcious that *Jacob*'s Charge was moſt juſtly founded, attempted not a Vindication of himſelf and therefore, waving the Debate, he aſſumed an Air of Fondneſs and Reſpect for *Jacob*, his Wives and his Children, as nearly related to himſelf, and propoſed a Covenant of Peace between them. This being agreed to by both Parties, they erected a Pillar or Heap of Stones by Way of *Memorandum*, and then took a mutual Oath, that neither of them would invade the Property of the other, and that *Jacob* would not treat his Wives unbecoming an affectionate Husband.

The Ceremony thus finiſhed, *Jacob* entertained his Brethren that Night upon the Mount, and the next Morning *Laban* took leave of his Daughters and their Children, and they both departed for their reſpective Habitations.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

God again appears unto Jacob. Jacob *ſends a Meſſenger, and Preſents to his Brother* Eſau. *Wreſtles with an Angel. Is called* Iſrael. *Meets his Brother, who receives him kindly.* Dinah *is raviſhed. The* Shechemites *are circumciſed, and afterwards deſtroyed together with their City by the Sons of* Jacob *in the Revenge for the Rape of* Dinah.

AS *Jacob* was favoured with a heavenly Viſion when he firſt departed from his Father's; ſo it pleaſed God again to favour him with the ſame Token of his Protection at his Return. When *Jacob* ſaw the Angels that were ſent to meet him on the Way; he ſaid, *This* is God's (*a*) Hoſt. Though this Patriarch had the greateſt reaſon to rely on the Protection of the Almighty; yet as he was near the Confines of *Edom*, and within the reach of his incenſed Brother *Eſau*, whom he had highly provoked, and concerning the Abatement of whoſe Reſentment he had received no Account from his Mother, though he had been abſent twenty Years; he thought it moſt prudent to ſend a Meſſage to him in Order to allay his Anger and regain, if poſſible, his fraternal Affection.

He therefore ordered the Meſſen-

(*a*) Hoſt. The original Word, ſignifies, two Hoſts or Camps; becauſe the Angel appeared like two armies drawn up on either Side for his Protection, according to that beautiful Expreſſion of the Pſalmiſt; The Angel of the Lord *encampeth* round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. *Pſalm* xxxiv. 4.

Lord,

gers to addreſs *Eſau* in theſe humble Terms; *Thy Servant* Jacob *ſaith thus, I have ſojoured with* Laban, *and ſtayed there until now: and I have Oxen and Aſſes, and Men Servants and Women Servants, and I have ſent to my (b) Lord, that I may find Grace in thy Sight.* The Meſſengers having fulfilled their Embaſſy returned, and gave *Jacob* ſuch an Account as terrified him not a little. They brought no direct Anſwer from *Eſau*, and only told *Jacob*, that his Brother was coming to meet him at the Head of four hundred Men. Concluding that the Deſign of this mighty Retinue was to act againſt him in an hoſtile Manner; *Jacob* was greatly perplexed in what Manner to proceed; he knew on the one Hand, that his Numbers were too ſmall to engage with his Brother; and that on the other Hand, his Baggage was too heavy for Flight: he therefore come to a Reſolution to divide his People and Cattle into two Bands, which being placed at a convenient Diſtance; if *Eſau* ſhould fall upon one of them, the other might have a Chance to eſcape.

This was the Plan laid down by *Jacob*; but as he well knew from former Experience, that his Safety depended upon the divine Protection, independant of human Meaſures; to the God of his Salvation, he applied in this critical Juncture, in Terms to the following Import: "God of my Father *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, which ſaidſt to me, return to thy Country, and I will do well by thee: I am not worthy of the leaſt of thy Mercies; but thou haſt increaſed my Stock, for when I paſſed over the River firſt, I had nothing but my Staff, and now I am become a Multitude: Deliver me, I pray thee, from the Hand of my Brother, for I fear his Malice, leſt he ſmite me and mine. Remember how thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee Good, and make thy Poſterity as the Sand of the Sea, which cannot be numbered for Multitude."

After he had thus humbly and earneſtly implored the Guidance and Protection of the Almighty, he determined to purſue another Meaſure, which he hoped might appeaſe the Anger of his Brother; for imagining that he might eſteem the firſt Meſſage but a meer formal Compliment, he reſolved, ſince he had already informed him, that he was become very rich to ſend him a very liberal Preſent; but fearing that he might attack him before the Preſent could be delivered, he was obliged to ſend that which was neareſt at Hand; which were theſe Articles: Two hundred ſhe Goats, and twenty he Goats; two hundred Ewes, and twenty Rams; thirty Milch Camels with their Colts; forty Kine, and ten Bulls, and twenty ſhe Aſſes, with ten Aſs-Foles, all in ſeparate Droves, ordering his Servants to keep

(b) Lord. By this Submiſſion, *Jacob* did not reject the Honour God conferred upon him, but reverenced *Eſau* as his elder Brother. Beſides it is beyond a Doubt, that *Jacob* meant no more by the Terms, Lord and Servant, than a meer honorary Compliment, firſt practiſed among the idolatrous Nations, and then uſed by the People of God, in order to ſoften the Reſentment of the rugged *Eſau*.

them at a proper Diſtance, charging the Servant who followed the foremoſt Drove, to deliver the Preſent to his Brother, and ſo on to the reſt, hoping that ſuch a ſubmiſſive Conduct might ſoften his rugged Temper, and induce him to receive him kindly.

Having diſmiſſed the Servants with his Preſent to his Brother, he paſſed the Brook *Jabbock* that very Night, with his Wives and Children; and being left alone, there appeared a Man, who (*c*) wreſtled with him till the break of Day, and permitted *Jacob* to prevail; but to convince him that he obtained not the Victory thro' his own Strength; he touched the Hollow of his Thigh, and put it out of joint. At break of Day, the Angel deſired to depart, but *Jacob* would not let him go, till he had bleſſed him.

The Man then enquired of him his Name, and on his telling him it was *Jacob*, reply'd, *Thy Name ſhall not only be called* Jacob, *but likewiſe* (*d*) *Iſrael*; *for as a Prince thou haſt Power with God and with Men, and haſt prevailed.*

Jacob in his Turn, demanded his Name, but he waved anſwering him, and having bleſſed him, departed.

When the Sun aroſe, *Jacob* removed from the Place where he haſt wreſtled, and called it (*e*) *Peniel, becauſe*, ſaid he, *I have ſeen God Face to Face, and my Life is preſerved.*

Jacob then proceeded on his Journey, and had not gone far, before he ſaw his Brother *Eſau*, attended by four hundred Men; upon which he diſpoſed his People in ſuch Order as beſt conduced to the Reception of his Brother, and Safety of thoſe he held moſt dear. He placed the two Handmaids, and their Children foremoſt; *Leah* and her Children in the middle, and his beloved *Rachael* and her Son *Joſeph* in the rear, and paſſed himſelf before them all.

When he approached his Brother, he bowed himſelf ſeven Times to the Ground; but *Eſau*, filled with the tendereſt Senſe of fraternal Affection, at once removed the Neceſſity both of his Fears and Compliments, by running with eager Joy to meet him, falling upon his Neck, and moſt cordially embracing him.

Thus was Revenge turned into Love and Pity; and *Eſau*, who once thirſted for his Brother's Blood, diſſolves into Tears of Joy, and melts into the ſofteſt Endearments of Friendſhip.

Eſau thus tranſported with this happy Interview, ſurvey'd with Pleaſure his Brother's immenſe Store, but was with much Difficulty perſuaded to ac-

(*c*) Wreſt'ed, &c. The Perſon who is here ſaid to have wreſtled with *Jacob*, was an Angel, and the Reaſon of his permitting him to prevail, was to give him Hope, that in like Manner, he ſhould mitigate and conquer his Brother *Eſau*. This was the Opinion of both the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers.

(*d*) *Iſrael*, &c. We have in this Place, a remarkable Inſtance, that Tranſlations often contradict themſelves; for it is very certain that this Patriarch, was afterwards called *Jacob*. *No more* therefore ſhould be tranſlated *not only*, which is very properly implied in this Place, and would remove the ſeeming Contradiction.

(*e*) *Peniel* or *Penuel*, as it is in the next Verſes, that is, the Face of God.

cept of a Preſent. He ſaluted his Wives and Children; and as a farther Token of his Affection and ſincere Reconciliation, offered to accompany him the remaining Part of his Journey.

But *Jacob* ſtill retaining a Spark of Jealouſy, waved the kind Offer, by telling him, that the Children being tender, and many of the Cattle young if they were over-driven, moſt of them would die, and therefore deſiring that his Brother would paſs over before him, and himſelf would follow gently, as the Children and Cattle could bear, until he ſhould attend him in his own Country of (*f*) *Seir*.

As *Jacob* declined his Brother's Offer, he courteouſly propoſed to leave ſome of his People to guard and attend him; but *Jacob* likewiſe evaded this, by a handſome Compliment.

They then parted from each other, *Eſau* proceeding towards *Seir*, and *Jacob* towards *Succoth*, where, as he intended to take up his Abode for ſome Time, he built Conveniencies to ſhelter his People and Cattle.

From *Succoth* he removed to *Salem*, a City of SHECHEM, where having purchaſed a Piece of Ground of the Children of *Hamor*, for a hundred (*g*) Pieces of Money, he ſpread his Tent, erected an Altar, and called upon the Name of the moſt mighty God of *Iſrael*.

During the Patriarch's Stay in the Country of the *Shechemites*, his Daughter *Dinah*, who was now about ſixteen Years of Age, deſirous of ſeeing the Dreſſes and Ornaments of the Women of that Country, rambled abroad from her Mother's Tent. It fell out, that young *Shechem*, the Son of *Hamor*, Prince of that Country, ſaw the Damſel, and being enraptured with her Charms, and incapable of reſtraining his Paſſion, ſeized on the Opportunity of her being alone, to deprive her of her Virtue.

This Violation, inſtead of diſguſting, inflamed him the more; for he afterwards loved her with an exceſſive Affection, inſomuch that not being able to live without her, he importuned his Father, to procure her for him in marriage.

The News of the Rape ſoon reached the Ears of *Jacob*, who ſuſpended his Reſentment, till his Sons came home from the Field, when he made them acquainted with the Injury their Siſter had ſuſtained, and the Diſhonour that reſulted to their Family; upon which they ſecretly vowed Revenge.

Shechem, having prevailed with his Father *Hamor* to uſe his Intereſt in obtaining for him the beautiful *Dinah*; he took an Opportunity, when *Jacob* and his Sons were together, to acquaint them with his Son's ardent Love for the Damſel, and intreat that he might have her to Wife. To enforce the Entreaty, he propoſed, that *Jacob*'s Family ſhould intermarry with his People, and offered them the Free-

(*f*) *Seir*. It is the Opinion of moſt Commentators, that *Jacob* never intended to meet *Eſau*, at *Seir*, and that this was only an Evaſion of *Eſau*'s Offer.

(*g*) Pieces, &c. This is ſometimes rendered an hundred Lambs, becauſe the Image of Lamb was ſtamped upon it.

Third

dom of the Country, to dwell, trade, and ſettle therein.

To ſtrengthen this Propoſal, *Shechem*, who was preſent at the Conference, offered them what Advantage they ſhould pleaſe to nominate, bidding them only name their Terms, and they ſhould be granted to the uttermoſt, provided they would give him their Siſter in marriage.

The Sons of *Jacob* retained their Reſentment, tho' as yet they concealed it; and ſtill deſirous of avenging the Diſhonour done to their Family; to avail themſelves hereafter, they inſiſted on nothing leſs than a general Circumciſion of the *Shechemites*, as the only Condition on which they would accept of an Agreement to ſettle and incorporate with them.

Shechem, was ſo enamoured of *Dinah*, and *Hamor* ſo fond of his Son, that this very extraordinary Propoſal of the Sons of *Jacob* was comply'd with. To further the Agreement, the Prince and his Son, on their return to Town, ſummoned their Subjects together, praiſed the *Iſraelites* as a quiet, well-diſpoſed People, and aſſured them, that if they ſhould intermarry with them, they would become Proprietors of their Subſtance, which was very conſiderable, and all on the eaſy Condition of being circumciſed.

Theſe weak People, captivated with the proſpect of great Wealth, conſented one and all to the Propoſal of *Hamor* and *Shechem*, and were every Male of them immediately circumciſed.

Notwithſtanding the *Shechemites* had ſubmitted to the painful Rite of Circumciſion, the propoſed Condition of Reconciliation with *Jacob*'s Family; yet *Simeon* and *Levi*, the Brothers of *Dinah* took Advantage of their Pain and Anguiſh, when they were leaſt able to reſiſt; and on the (*b*) third Day after the Operation, fell upon the City, and deſtroyed all the Male Inhabitants; an Action ſhocking to Humanity; for doubtleſs many of the Sufferers were intirely ignorant of the Deſign of the Leader.

They likewiſe ſearched the Houſe of *Shechem*, where they found *Dinah* their Siſter, and brought her out, after which they fell to plunder, and carried off not only what was found in the City, but all that was in the Field, making the Women and Children priſoners, what they could not carry off they deſtroyed.

Thus did the Sons of *Jacob* glut their Revenge on the miſerable *Shechemites*, for the Rape committed on their Siſter *Dinah*, by the Son of their Prince.

Pious *Jacob* was not only unconcerned in, but wholly ignorant of this Slaughter committed by his Sons, till it was over; for we find that he ſeverely reprimanded their Barbarity as threatening the moſt dreadful Conſequences to himſelf and his Family: *Ye have troubled me, to make me to ſtink among the Inhabitants of the Land, amongſt the* Canaanites, *and the* Perizites; *and I being few in Number, they*

(*b*) Third Day. This was the Time as Phyſicians obſerve, when Fevers generally attend Circumciſion, occaſioned by the Inflammation of the Wound, and which was more painful then, as the *Hebrews* obſerved, than at any Time elſe.

Strange

ſhall gather themſelves together againſt me and ſlay me; and I ſhall be deſtroyed I and my Houſe. But *Simeon* and *Levi* who had been principally concerned in the deſtructive Scene, urged as an excuſe for their riotous Behaviour, the Regard they had to their Siſter's Virtue; *Shall he deal with our Siſter as with an Harlot*; and ſo ended the Remonſtrance between the pious Father and his two headſtrong Sons.

CHAP. IX.

Jacob *removes to* Bethel. *Purges his Houſe of Idolatry.* Rachel *dies in Child-bed.* Jacob *viſits his Father* Iſaac. Joſeph's *Piety and Wiſdom excite the Hatred of his Brethren.* Joſeph's *Dreams increaſe their Envy. They therefore conſpire his Death. He is ſold to* Potiphar, *an Officer of* Pharaoh's *Guard.* Judah's *Inceſt with* Tamar.

THE ſavage Diſpoſition of the *Chaldeans*, exaſperated by the Injuries they had ſuſtained from the Sons of *Jacob*, ſeem to have been the Motive of God's gracious Command to the Patriarch to remove his Settlement and repair to *Bethel*, the Place which he had dedicated to his immediate Service: for though they had wholly deſtroyed one Colony, there were more People that bordered thereabout, who either in Defence of themſelves, or in Revenge for the cruel and unjuſt Treatment of their Countrymen, might give the good Patriarch much Diſquiet, if not utterly deſtroy him. His Omnipotent God therefore bid him ariſe and go up to *Bethel* and dwell there, and erect an Altar to God, who appeared to him when he fled from the Preſence of his incenſed Brother *Eſau*.

Purſuant to the Command of the Almighty, the obedient Patriarch having firſt ſtrictly charged his Family and all that belonged to him, to put away the ſtrange (*i*) Gods, which they had, be (*k*) clean, and change their Garments; told them to ariſe and go up to *Bethel*, the Houſe of God.

They immediately obeyed the Charge and delivered up to him their Idols and their (*l*) Earings, which, to prevent their being a future Snare to draw his Family from the Worſhip of the only true God, he pri-

(*i*) Strange Gods. Some Commentators are of Opinion that *Jacob* here referred to the *Teraphim*, which *Rachel* had ſtolen from *Laban*; while others ſuppoſe they were the Idols of the *Shechemites*. However, that they were Idols is as certain, as the Patriarchs caſting them away was pious.

(*k*) Be clean. The original Word ſignifies the waſhing away of Filth by Water, in which ſenſe it appears highly commendable in *Jacob*, on this ſolemn Occaſion, to enjoin all under his Care, to cleanſe themſelves from Idolatry, and the Guilt lately contracted by ſhedding innocent Blood. Beſides it was cuſtomary for thoſe, who came to appear before the Lord, to waſh their Clothes, ſee *Exod.* xix. 10. *Levit.* xvi. 13. 2 *Sam.* xii. 20.

(*l*) Earings. Theſe were dedicated to ſome Idol, and worn to render their Gods kind and propitious to them; and as they thus ſerved the Uſes of Idolatry, we need not wonder they are particularly mentioned by *Jacob*.

Ephrath

vately buried under the Oak near unto *Shechem*, from whence they were ready to depart.

When they proceeded on their Journey, God, ever mindful of his Promiſe to his choſen People, to enſure their Safety, ſtruck ſuch a Terror into the Cities round about them; that notwithſtanding the Provocation given by the Maſſacre at *Shechem*, none purſued them, and they paſſed unmoleſted to *Bethel*.

Jacob immediately on his Arrival, according to the divine Command, built an Altar, and performed his Vow to the moſt High: the very Vow (as generally ſuppoſed) which he made when God appeared to him in the ſame Place, as he fled from his Brother *Eſau*. Having performed this Act of Worſhip, it pleaſed the Lord again to appear to him, confirm his new Name *Iſrael*; and give him repeated Aſſurances of his Promiſes made to *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, with extaordinary Bleſſings to himſelf.

In token of this ſignal Favour of the Almighty, *Jacob* erected a Pillar of ſtone, in the very Place, where he had been honoured with the Divine Intercourſe, as a perpetual Monument of his Gratitude and Devotion, pouring a Drink-offering and Oil upon the ſame. But *Jacob* tarried not long at *Bethel*, for urged by filial Affection, he ſet forward toward *Mamre*, in order to viſit his aged Father. They intended to have ſtopped in their Way at *(m) Ephrath*, which though not far diſtant from *Bethel*, they had net reached before *Rachel* fell in Labour, and having very ſevere Pangs, the Midwife to encourage her, bid her not fear, for ſhe ſhould have this Son alſo. She was delivered indeed, but died immediately afterwards, having juſt a Moment's Space to name the Boy, *Benoni* or *Son of Sorrow*; but his Father unwilling to increaſe the Remembrance of ſo melancholy a Cauſe, called him *Benjaimn*, or *the Son of my right Hand*, intimating thereby his peculiar Affection for this laſt Pledge of his beloved Wife.

Jacob, to perpetuate the Memory of *Rachel*, erected a Monument over her Grave, which remained a great Number of Years after this Event. To add to his exceſſive Grief for the Loſs of one, to obtain whom he had undergone a long and painful Servitude; his Son *Reuben*, before they could reach *Mamre*, committed Inceſt with *Bilah*, his Father's concubinary Wife; of which though he took no Notice, he retained a painful Senſe to his dying Day, as is evident from a reproachful Hint he gave him juſt before he paid the Debt of Nature. Though theſe aggravated Griefs ſat heavy on his Mind, he continued his Reſolution of viſiting his aged Parent, purſued his Journey, and at length reached *Mamre*, and came unto the City of *(n) Arbath*, the Place of abode both of his Grandfather *Abraham*, and his Father *Iſaac*, who without Doubt was overjoyed at the return of his Son,

(m) *Ephrath*. This Place was afterwards call *Bethlehem*.

(n) *Arbath* was afterwards called *Hebron*. There-

as was the Son at the Sight of his venerable Parent. So various are the Accidents which befal the beſt of Men in this State of Trial, that pious *Jacob* had not long enjoyed the Company of his aged Father, before his Patience was exerciſed by a very afflicting Circumſtance.

His Son *Joſeph* being now arrived to the Age of ſeventeen Years, was employed with his Brethren in feeding the Flock: and the Lad obſerving their wicked Behaviour had (*o*) reported the ſame to his Father. This inflamed their Reſentment againſt him, and as they thought he was a Spy upon them, they determined to remove him from among them.

Their furious Rage was greatly inflamed by the extraordinary Token of Love which his Father ſhewed him, not only becauſe he was the Son of his beloved *Rachel*, but alſo becauſe he was (*p*) wiſe beyond his Years. This engaging Quality ſo far wrought upon the fond Parent, that to diſtinguiſh him from the reſt of his Children, he beſtowed on him a fine Veſt of (*q*) many Colours, not thinking it would inflame their Jealouſy and Hatred to ſo exceſceſſive a Degree.

This Token of ſuper-eminence ſo exaſperated *Jacob*'s other Sons, that they not only with-held from him the common Offices of Civility, but deviſed Means to perplex and render him unhappy. This Averſion was greatly increaſed by *Joſeph*'s two Dreams, which he very innocently related to them, not imagining they were ſo maliciouſly diſpoſed towards him, as he afterwards found them to be. The firſt Dream was, "that as he was binding Sheaves with his Brethren in the Field, his Sheaf aroſe, and ſtood upright, while their Sheaves round about fell down; and, as it were, made Obeiſance to his."

The Brethren reply'd with Scorn, *Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or ſhalt thou indeed have Dominion over us?* His ſecond Dream which he told them with as inoffenſive a Deſign, as he had done the former, ſtill added to their Malice, "I have ſeen (ſays he) the Sun and Moon and eleven Stars fall

(*o*) There is a Variety of Opinions concerning the particular Nature of the Faults, which *Joſeph* had told his Father, were committed by his Brethren. Some think it was their contentious Way of living; others, the Sin of Sodomy; others that of Beſtiality; but whatever it was, it may be gathered from their inveterate Malice againſt him, that it was no ſmall Crime, becauſe they hated him even to Death.

(*p*) Wiſe, &c. According to the *Hebrew* Text, the Motive of *Jacob*'s prefering *Joſeph* to the Reſt of his Children, was becauſe he was Son of the Elders or Senators, that is, he was Teacher of his Elders, and greatly excelled them in Genius and Capacity: our Verſion can by no Means be improper, for if his Love was founded on the Motive which that ſuggeſts, he muſt have loved *Zebulon*, as well as *Joſeph* ſince he was of the ſame age, and *Benjamin* more, who was born ſixteen Years after *Joſeph*.

(*q*) Many Colours. Whatever was the Quality of this Coat, it is plain, that it was compoſed of divers Colours; and as ſuch Garments were in high Eſteem among the Eaſtern Nations, and worn by Perſons of the greateſt Diſtinction; this party-coloured Dreſs diſtinguiſhed him above his Brethren and gave riſe to their Jealouſy and Hatred.

In

down before me." So greatly was he impreſſed with this Event, that he could not conceal it from his Father, who either to appeaſe the Anger of his other Sons, or check that Preſumption, which in young Minds ſo naturally ariſes from good Omens, reprimanded him in theſe Words: *Shall I, and thy Mother, and thy Brethren, indeed, come to bow down ourſelves to thee, to the Earth?*

Jacob, who was no Stranger to theſe Viſions finding them thus repeated, ſtor'd them up in his Memory as Predictions of Events that would certainly come to paſs; and as he was uneaſy with Reſpect to his Sons, who were now feeding their Flocks in *Shechem*, the Scene of their late Cruelties, leſt the Inhabitants of the Land ſhould take the firſt favourable Opportunity of revenging the Death of their Countrymen, thought proper to ſend *Joſeph* to them, though it was near ſixty Miles diſtant from *Hebron*, the Place where he now dwelt.

But by this Means the pious Father became the fatal Inſtrument of delivering his darling Child into the Hands of his implacable Brethren; for *Joſeph*, in Obedience to his Father's Command, went to *Shechem*, and not finding them there, wandered about till a Stranger directed him to *Dothan*, where, when they ſaw him afar off, they conſpired againſt him to deſtroy him, ſaying one to another, *Behold this (r) Dreamer cometh: Come now, therefore, and let us ſlay him, and caſt him into ſome Pit, and we will ſay, ſome evil Beaſt hath devoured him: and we ſhall ſee what will become of his Dreams.* *Reuben*, who was leſs maliciouſly diſpoſed than the reſt, could not approve of the horrid Reſolution, and being deſirous of protecting him from their Rage, as he could not deviſe any open or direct Method, perſuaded them to caſt him into a Pit, that he might have an Opportunity of delivering him again to his Father. The reſt, conſidering that if he periſhed in the Pit, it would anſwer their End, conſented to the Advice of *Reuben*. This Reſolution was no ſooner taken, than the innocent Youth, unappriſed of their malicious Deſign, came up to them, and as he was about to deliver his Father's indulgent Counſel to them, they firſt ſtripped him of his party-coloured Veſt, and then caſt him into the Pit, which was then dry and empty.

Unaffected by this cruel Treatment of their Brother, they left him to periſh in the Pit, and without Remorſe, ſat down to regale themſelves with what Proviſions the Place afforded, certain that he muſt now inevitably periſh with Hunger. But the Eye of Omniſcience beheld his Diſtreſs and pitied his Deſpair, for as *Reuben* had been already the Means of preventing his immediate Death; *Judah* now becomes the means of delivering him out of the Pit.

It happened, that as they were re-

(r) In the Original it is, Behold this Maker of Dreams cometh; which ſhews that they conſidered his Dreams as Fictions of his own, nay, is confirmed by their future Conduct.

Mi-

freſhing themſelves, a Company of *Iſhmaelites*, travelling with various Merchandiſe from *Gilead* to *Egypt*, approached, and *Judah* availing himſelf of the Opportunity, in order to reſcue his Brother *Joſeph* from certain Death, urged the Iniquity of being inſtrumental to the Deſtruction of their own Brother, by which they would contract an eternal ſtain of Guilt; and adviſed them to ſell him to the *Iſhmaelites*, by which Means they would not only ſave his Life, but conſiderably promote their own Gain. They immediately conſented to *Judah*'s Proſpoſal, and dragging *Joſeph* out of the Pit, ſold him to the (*s*) *Midianitiſh* Merchants, for twenty Pieces of Silver, and theſe carrying him to *Egypt* ſold him to *Potiphar* an (*t*) Officer of the King, and Captain of his Guards.

Reuben, who was abſent when this Circumſtance happened, having propoſed the caſting *Joſeph* into the Pit in order to ſave his Life, now went thither to ſee, and doubtleſs to aſſiſt him in making his Eſcape; but aſtoniſhed at not finding him, he returned to his Brethren, (*u*) rent his Clothes, and upbraided himſelf as the Cauſe of his being loſt: *The Child is not, and whither ſhall I go?* The guilty Brethren, to take off all Suſpicion from themſelves concerted this Scheme: they took *Joſeph*'s Veſt, dipped it in the Blood of a Kid, and ſent it to their Father, with this Meſſage; *This have we found, know now whether it be thy Son's Coat, or no.* The good old Patriarch was ſoon convinced to whom the bloody Garment belonged, and not ſuſpecting that any human Hand could be guilty of ſuch unnatural Cruelty, concluded that he had been unhappily devoured by ſome wild Beaſt. This Loſs was the moſt ſevere that the good old Man ever ſuſtained; when his beloved *Rachel* died, ſhe paid the Debt of Nature in a natural Way; but *Joſeph* (according to his preſent Apprehenſion) dies by a ſavage Animal, and is barbarouſly torn in Pieces before his Time. His Grief therefore knows no Meaſure, he puts on Sackcloth, and mourns for his beloved Son many Days, nay, ſo exceſſive was his Sorrow, that when his Children in general endeavoured to comfort him, he aſſured them he could only ceaſe to mourn, when he ſhould follow him in the Path of Mortality. But as Circumſtances are (*w*) interwoven by the

(*s*) *Midianitiſh* Merchants. Theſe were the ſame with thoſe termed above *Iſhmaelites*.

(*t*) Officer. This Word in the Original ſignifies an Eunuch, but cannot be taken here literally, but figuratively. It was the Cuſtom and is ſtill in thoſe Parts to commit the Keeping of the Queen and Women of Quality to Eunuchs; but *Potiphar* cannot be ſuppoſed to be ſuch, for he had a Wife. Beſides it was cuſtomary among the Eaſtern People, to call their Noblemen, *Eunuchs*.

(*u*) Rent his Cloaths. This was one of the Signs of ancient Mourning, and uſed in Caſes of the greateſt Diſtreſs. From this Behaviour of *Reuben*, it is moſt reaſonable to conclude, that he was abſent and conſequently not privy to the Tranſaction of ſelling *Joſeph* to the *Iſhmaelites*.

(*w*) Interwoven, &c. Though the late and following Events ſeem to be connected by the ſacred Writer, the Marriage of *Judah*, of whom we are now about to ſpeak, happened ſometime before *Joſeph* was ſold into *Egypt*; though it is related by *Moſes* after that Event.

Inherit

JACOB *weeping over his Son* JOSEPH'S *Coat*
Gen 37.33.

BRITISH
2 AUG 32
MUSEUM

ſacred Hiſtorian, we muſt beg Leave to defer our further Account of *Joſeph*, in order to relate ſome intervening Occurrences, which being material, we cannot paſs over unnoticed.

Some time before the late Tranſaction, *Jacob*'s Son *Judah*, had greatly varied from the received Cuſtom of his Forefathers, in marrying a *Canaanitiſh* Woman, by whom he had three Sons, *Er*, *Onan* and *Shelah*.

In proceſs of Time when *Er*, his eldeſt Son, grew up to Years of Maturity, he took him a Wife, whoſe Name was *Tamar*. *Er*, for his Abomination in the Sight of the Lord, was ſuddenly taken off, upon which *Judah* adviſed *Onan*, his ſecond Son, to marry his Brother's Widow, in order to preſerve the Succeſſion of the Family.

Onan knowing that if *Tamar* ſhould bear him any Children, the eldeſt would (*x*) inherit in the Name of his elder Brother deceaſed, and therefore not be accounted as his, pretended to follow his Father's Counſel, by going into *Tamar*'s Chamber; but came out without following the Inſtinct of Nature. But this Crime was ſo provoking to the Almighty, that the ſame Judgment was inflicted upon him, as had been upon his Brother.

Shelah, his third Son, being as yet too young for Procreation, *Judah* deſired his Daughter-in-law *Tamar*, to retire to her Father's Houſe, and there remain a Widow, till he ſhould grow up, when he ſhould marry her.

Tamar accordingly retired; and in Proceſs of Time *Shuah*, *Judah*'s Wife died, and *Shelah* arrived at Man's Eſtate, but waiting a long Time in vain, the Performance of *Judah*'s Promiſe, *Tamar* determined on Revenge for her Diſappointment.

Being told at a certain Time, that her Father-in-law was going up to *Timnath*, to ſhear his Sheep, ſhe took off her Widow's Garment, diſguiſed herſelf in the Habit of a Harlot, and ſat herſelf in an open Path, thro' which ſhe knew *Judah* muſt neceſſarily paſs in his Way to *Timnath*.

When *Judah* beheld her, he took her to be a Proſtitute, and as ſuch deſired intercourſe with her. She denied not his Requeſt, but demanded of him the Terms; he promiſed her a Kid, and the Woman having a further Deſign upon him, required a Security for the Fulfilment of the Terms, which by their mutual Agreement were to be his Ring or Signet, (*y*) his Bracelets and his Staff. The Pledges being delivered, they went together, and ſhe conceived by him.

Judah had no ſooner departed than ſhe retired, and having put off her diſguiſed Dreſs, reaſſumed her Widow's Habit, which ſhe had no ſooner done,

(*x*) Inherit, &c. This was long before the Law, by which it was injoined; yet tho' this is the firſt mention we have of it, it ſeems it was then a known Cuſtom, and well underſtood even by young *Onan*.

(*y*) Bracelet. The *Hebrew* word ſignifies a *Scarf*, or *Girdle*. The *Chaldee* renders it a Handkerchief, but it is variouſly tranſlated by the *Syriac* and *Arabic*. Some tranſlate it *ſomething twiſted*: it ſeems to have been a Girdle made of Gold, twiſted in the Manner of a Thread, and ſuſpended from the Neck, and not like a Bracelet from the Arm.

but her deceived Father-in-law went to his Flock, took a Kid, and ſent it by his Friend *Hirah* the *Adullamite* to redeem the Pledge.

Hirah ſeeking her in vain returned, and told *Judah*; who therefore determined to let her keep the Pledge, leſt the Diſcovery of his Connection with her might bring him into Diſgrace.

In the Courſe of about three Months, *Judah* was informed, that *Tamar* his Daughter-in-law had play'd the Harlot, and was with Child by Whoredom; when he reſenting the Diſhonour ſhe had brought upon his Family, and unmindful of his late Folly and Wickedneſs, ordered her to be brought forth, and publickly (z) burnt.

When ſhe was brought forth, ſhe produced the Pledge, and ſent it to her Father-in-law, aſſuring him at the ſame Time, that the Man to whom thoſe Things belonged, was the very Perſon by whom ſhe was with Child.

Judah convinced of the Deception, acknowledged the Pledge, and reflecting on the Injuſtice he had done her, in with-holding from her his Son, whom he had promiſed her in Marriage, transferred the Crime upon himſelf, by declaring that ſhe had been more (a) righteous than him.

When the Time of her Travail arrived, ſhe was delivered of Twins, one of which putting out his Hand, the Midwife bound it with a ſcarlet Thread by way of Diſtinction as the Firſt-born; but he drawing back his Hand, his Brother came forth, whereupon he was called *Pharez*, which ſignifies an *Irruption* or *Breach*, and the other with the Thread on his Hand, *(b) Zara*. Thus inſtead of the Son raiſing up Iſſue to the deceaſed Brother, the Father inceſtuouſly raiſed Iſſue to the deceaſed Son, but ſhocked at the horrid Crime, he abandoned all future Converſe with that ſubtle Woman.

CHAP. X.

Death of Iſaac. Joſeph *is advanced in* Potiphar's *Houſe. Reſiſts the Temptation of his Miſtreſs. Is falſly accuſed and impriſoned. Finds Favour in the Sight of the Keeper, who commits to him the Charge of two of* Pharaoh's *principal Officers. Inter-*

(z) Burnt. If it be asked by what Authority, *Tamar*'s Father-in-law paſſed Sentence, we thus reply. The Ancients ſuppoſed every Man to be Judge or Chief Magiſtrate in his own Family; ſo that tho' *Tamar* was a *Canaanite*, yet as ſhe had married into *Judah*'s Family, and brought Diſgrace upon it, ſhe neceſſarily lay under the Cognizance, of him, who may be ſuppoſed from what followed to have ſuſpended the Sentence, till he had enquired into the Cauſe of her being with Child.

(a) Righteous, &c. He does not ſay *Tamar*, was more holy or chaſte, but more righteous or juſt, that is, *Judah* not keeping his Promiſe in marrying her to *Shelah*, provoked her to lay this Trap for him, reſolving, ſince he would not let her have Children by *Shelah*, ſhe would have them by him: thus though ſhe may be deemed more wicked in the Sight of God, ſhe appeared more juſt in the Judgment of *Judah*.

(b) *Zara*; that is, He ariſeth, becauſe he had given a Sign of his Coming, by putting out his Hand.

prets

prets their Dreams. Interprets Pharaoh's *and is thereby greatly promoted. Begets Children. A Famine ſucceeds the ſeven Years Plenty.* Joſeph's *Brethren arrive in* Egypt, *and are impriſoned by him, but ſent back on leaving one as a Pledge, and promiſing to bring to him, their youngeſt Brother* Benjamin.

WHEN *Joſeph* was firſt ſold into *Egypt*, his Grandfather was living, but died in the Courſe of the Event that followed, being an hundred and eighty Years old, having lived longer than any ſince *Terah*. The good old Patriarch was buried by his Sons *Eſau* and *Jacob*, in the Cave that is in the Field of *Macpelah*, which *Abraham* had purchaſed of *Ephron*, for a burying Place for his Family.

But with the ſacred Writer, we now reſume our Hiſtory, which has been interrupted by the Tranſactions relative to *Judah*'s Family, and obſerve, that *Joſeph* in proceſs of Time, by his faithful Service ſo obtained the Favour of *Potiphar* his Maſter, that he not only diſmiſſed him from every laborious Office, but made him Overſeer of his whole Property, and committed the Charge of his Houſe to his ſole Care and Direction.

Joſeph being thus appointed ſole director of the Concerns of *Potiphar* both within and without Doors, the Lord was pleaſed to command a Bleſſing on the Houſe of the *Egyptian*, who flouriſhed extremely, and daily increaſed in his good Offices towards his faithful Servant.

Thus ſituated, *Joſeph* had Reaſon to hope for a comfortable Life, though ſold to Slavery, and await his Liberty at the Reward of his Truth and Fidelity: but it pleaſed God farther to exerciſe his Faith and Patience, in order to prepare him for a ſtill brighter Diſplay of his Grace and Goodneſs towards his choſen People.

Joſeph was of a very comely Form, ſweet Complexion, and winning Deportment: Theſe united Charms in Proceſs of Time attracted the Notice and excited the Love of his Maſter's Wife, who, when all tacit Tokens to draw the Youth into an Indulgence of her unlawful Flame failed, was ſo fired by her eager Paſſion, that ſhe broke through every Rule of Decency, and in plain Terms courted him to her Bed. In a ſhort Time, an Opportunity offered, (as Vice ſeldom fails of aſſiſting it Servants:) It happened one Day, that *Potiphar* being in waiting on the King, and the reſt of the Servants employed about their Work in the Field, none but the comely Hebrew and his wanton Miſtreſs were left in the Houſe.

When *Joſeph* therefore came into the Room where ſhe was ſitting, ſhe again attacked him, and in plain Terms, aſked him, to lie with her. The innocent Youth ſtartled at ſuch an Attack from one of her Sex and Quality, to avoid the Commiſſion of ſo diſingenuous a Crime, expoſtulated with her on its horrid and aggravated Nature, having given a poſitive Denial: *But he refuſed, and ſaid unto his Maſter's Wife: Behold my Maſter wotteth not what is with me in the Houſe, and he hath committed all that he hath to my Hand. There is none*

none greater in this Houſe than I; neither hath he kept back any Thing from me, but thee, becauſe thou art his Wife: How then can I do this great Wickedneſs and Sin againſt God?

But this Repulſe, ſufficient to have filled with Shame a Mind not entirely loſt to Honour and Virtue, had no Effect on this lewd Woman, whoſe Deſire grew ſo vehement, that ſhe caught him by his Garment, and again importuned him to lie with her; *Joſeph* therefore, having no other Means of eſcaping from her, left his Cloak in her Hand and fled.

Finding his Virtue unconquerable, and fearing the Diſgrace that would attend the Diſcovery of her ſhameful Paſſion, as well as determined to revenge the Denial, ſhe came to a Reſolution of laying the Charge upon him, to prevent its falling upon herſelf: Feigning therefore a prodigious Outcry and uncommon Surprize, and holding at the ſame Time *Joſeph*'s Garment in her Hand, thoſe Servants, who were neareſt the Houſe immediately ran to her Aſſiſtance; upon which ſhe vehemently exclaimed; *See, he hath brought in an* (c) Hebrew *unto us to mock us: he came unto me, to be with me*, and further to engage them in her Cauſe, when the Affair ſhould come to Examination, craftily added, *And I cried with a loud Voice; and it came to paſs, when he heard that I lifted up my Voice and cried, that he left his Garment with me, and fled, and got him out.*

Having thus prepared the Servants to confirm her Declaration ſhe laid the Cloak by her, to produce it as an Evidence againſt him on her Lord's Return. *Potiphar* had no ſooner entered the Houſe, than ſhe moſt violently exclaimed againſt the Diſhonour offered her by his *Hebrew* Servant; upon which the credulous Huſband, without the leaſt Enquiry into the Merits of the Cauſe, immediately committed him to the King's Priſon.

Nor did a Covenant-keeping God deſert his faithful Servant under this cloudy Scene; for thus bereft of Friend, Relation, and every Kind of Aſſiſtance, he received the cleareſt Intimations of divine Favour, and grew ſo highly in the eſteem of the Gaoler, that he committed all the Priſoners to his Care, and gave him, as his Maſter had done before, the ſole Direction of all his Concerns. This Conduct of the Priſon-keeper was indeed founded on the ſame Motive as that of *Potiphar*, for he, as well as the other obſerved the extraordinary Succeſs with which God crowned all his Undertakings.

While *Joſeph* was confined, it happened that the King's chief (d) Butler and Baker were committed to the ſame Priſon, and being delivered to the Care

(c) She called not *Joſeph* by his own Name, but that of his People, (an *Hebrew*) to inflame them the more againſt him: for the *Egyptians* moſt inveterately hated the *Hebrews*.

(d) Butler, &c. It is evident from the ſacred Writings, that theſe Men held conſiderable Poſts in the King's Houſhold. *Diodorus Siculus* confirms this Aſſertion by affirming, that no home-born Slaves were admitted to ſerve the Kings of *Egypt*, but all their Officers were Sons of their moſt illuſtrious Prieſts.

of

of *Joſeph*, he attended them in Perſon, and thereby contracted an Intimacy with them. On one and the ſame Night, they each of them dreamed a very extraordinary Dream, and being much affected with the ſame, *Joſeph* demanded of them the Cauſe of their Melancholy? And they told him they had each dreamed a Dream that Night, and being in Priſon could procure no Intrepreter.

Joſeph, to take off their Minds from a Reliance on the vain Superſtitions that prevailed in the Country of the *Egyptians*, who in ſuch Caſes truſted to Diviners and Soothſayers, having in a Kind of Appeal to them, given them to underſtand that the Interpretation of Dreams belonged unto God, deſired to know their Dreams. The Butler told him he dreamt he ſaw a Vine that had three Branches, which budded by Degrees, then bloſſom'd, and at length brought forth ripe Grapes, that he held *Pharaoh*'s Cup in his Hand, preſſed the Juice into the ſame, and gave it to the King to drink. *Joſeph* thus interpreted the Dream; "The three Branches denote three Days, within which *Pharaoh* will reſtore thee to thy Place, and thou ſhalt, as uſual, give him to drink according to the Duty of thine Office."

All that the Interpreter required for ſo agreeable a Preſage was, that he would remember him, when reſtored, and intercede with the King for his Enlargement from a Confinement inflicted upon him without any juſt Cauſe. The other Officer prompted by the happy Interpretation he had already given, proceeded to tell him that he dreamt he had three white Baſkets upon his Head; in the uppermoſt of which was all Manner of baked Meats for the King's Table, and the Birds eat them out of the Baſket that was upon his Head. *Joſeph* readily interpreted his Dream thus; "The three Baſkets are three days, at the End of which thou ſhalt have thy head *(e)* taken off, and then be hanged on a Tree, where the Birds ſhall eat thy Fleſh." *Joſeph*'s Interpretation was ſoon verify'd; for in the Space of three Days, the Butler was reſtored to his former Office, and the Baker hanged; but the former proved ungrateful, and unmindful of his Promiſe; inſomuch that a conſiderable Space intervened, between the Time of his being reſtored, and *Joſeph*'s Enlargement and Promotion in *Pharaoh*'s Houſe, which happened in Conſequence of the following Incident.

When *Joſeph* had been upwards of two Years in Priſon, *Pharaoh* dreamt, that as he ſtood by the River *Nile*, there came up out of the River, ſeven fat Kine, and they fed among the *(f)*

(*e*) Taken off. Tho' it may appear ſtrange, that the ſacred Hiſtorian aſſerts, the Baker was beheaded firſt and hanged afterward; *Philo* obſerves it was cuſtomary to behead a Criminal and then hang him up. *Jeremiah* alſo confirms this Aſſertion, when he laments, that "the princes were hanged up by their Hands," which intimates that they had loſt their Heads before.

(*f*) Flags. The Word which we tranſlate, *Meadow*, ſignifies a *Flag*, which according to St. *Jerom*, was a common Name given to every vegetable that grows in a marſhy Place.

Flags; after which he ſaw ſeven others extremely lean and hagged, and the latter devoured the former.

This Dream awoke the King, but he did not long ruminate upon it before he ſlept and dreamed that he ſaw ſeven full Ears of Corn ſhoot from one Stalk; and ſoon after ſeven thin and blighted Ears ſprang up, which likewiſe devoured thoſe that were good and plenteous.

Pharaoh awaking in great Surpriſe and Concern, ſent for all the Magicians and wiſe Men, and told them his Dreams, but none amongſt them all could interpret one of them. Finding the King in the utmoſt Perplexity concerning ſo an extraordinary an Event, the Butler at length remembered *Joſeph*, and informed *Pharaoh*, that when he and his Fellow-ſervant laboured under his Majeſty's Diſpleaſure, they both dreamed in the Priſon, where a young Man, a Hebrew Servant to the Captain of the Guard, interpreted each of their Dreams exactly anſwerable to the Event.

The anxious King, pleaſed with the Information of an able Interpreter, immediately ſent for *Joſeph*, who was brought out of Priſon, and after having put on proper Attire, waited upon his Majeſty, who, impatient to hear the Event, told him without any Prelude, that he had dreamed two Dreams which none of his wiſe Men could expound, and had therefore ſent for him, as he was informed that he was ſkilful in the Art of interpreting.

Joſeph having informed him that the Power was of God and not of himſelf, told him he ſhould receive an agreeable Interpretation of the Dreams.

Pharaoh then related his Dreams, as already recounted, and *Joſeph* told him they both implied one and the ſame Thing, and that it was the Will of God thereby to remind him of future Events.

The Dreams he interpreted in this Manner:

"The ſeven fat Kine and full Ears, denote ſeven Years of Plenty: the ſeven lean Kine and withered Ears, ſeven Years of Famine which were to ſucceed; and upon the whole, that there would be ſeven fruitful Years followed by ſeven Years ſo very barren and unfruitful, that the Remembrance of Plenty ſhould be loſt throughout the Land of *Egypt*, and abſolute Famine univerſally prevail, and that the double Dream was to aſſure him of the Certainty of the awful Event."

Having thus interpreted the King's Dream to his utmoſt Satisfaction, tho' no ſmall Concern; *Joſeph* takes upon him the Office of a Counſellor; and adviſes him to improve the Hints given in the Dreams, by ſelecting ſome wiſe and honeſt Miniſter, who under him might be veſted with full Power, to appoint proper Offices in every City and Town throughout his Dominions; in order to lay up the fifth Part of the general Produce of the ſeven Years plenty in proper Granaries; which Reſerve ſhould be at the King's Diſpoſal, and ſecured againſt the ſeven Years Famine.

Such benevolent as well as provident Care and Counſel immediately obtained the Approbation of the King, who ſtruck with the extraordinary Foreſight and Sagacity of *Joſeph*, heſitated not long in fixing the Miniſter thus pro-

propoſed; for turning firſt to his Subjects, and then to *Joſeph*, he thus addreſſed them reſpectively. *Can we find ſuch a one as this is; a Man in whom the Spirit of God is? Foraſmuch as God hath ſhewed thee all this, there is none ſo diſcreet and wiſe as thou art: thou ſhalt be over my Houſe; and according to thy Word ſhall all my People be ruled: only in the Throne will I be greater than thou.*

As a Confirmation of his exalted Promotion, and to give his People a Senſe of the Duty they owed him; he took the Ring off his own Hand, and putting it on *Joſeph*'s, veſted him with every Enſign of Royalty; cauſing him to ride in the ſecond Chariot; and ordering his Heralds to proclaim before him (*g*) *Bow the Knee*, as a token of Honour and Subjection to him, as a chief Governor of *Egypt*.

Having thus beſtowed on him the greateſt Power and higheſt Honours; to attach him more ſtrongly to his Intereſt, *Pharaoh* changes his Name from *Joſeph* to (*h*) *Zaphnath-panneah*, and procures him an honourable Alliance, by Marriage with *Arſanath*, the Daughter of *Potipherah* (*i*) Prieſt of *On*.

Then ſeven plenteous Years commencing ſoon after his Promotion, *Joſeph* entered on his Office of Inſpector-General of Proviſions throughout the Kingdom of *Egypt*; and making a Circuit, reſerved all the Food that could be ſpared from the abſolute Demands of preſent Uſe in Store-houſes appointed for that neceſſary Purpoſe.

The ſame Method he invariably purſued every Seaſon of the fruitful Years, till he had amaſſed ſuch Quantities of Proviſions, as even to exceed Computation.

During the Time of Plenty, two Sons were born to *Joſeph*, the eldeſt of whom he called (*k*) *Manaſſeh*, and the younger (*l*) *Ephraim*.

The ſeven Years of Plenty being expired, the ſeven Years of Dearth commenced, according to *Joſeph*'s Prediction, and ſpread not only throughout the Land of *Egypt*, but alſo the neighbouring Countries, but through *Joſeph's* provident Care, under the Bleſſing of Divine Providence, *Egypt* was

(*g*) The Word *Abrech* which we render, *Bow the Knee*, is of uncertain Signification. *Some* render it, *Saviour of the World*, ſome *Tender Father*; and others, *Bow the Knee*, which certainly is moſt proper in this Place, being a Token of Honour and Subjection to *Joſeph*, now appointed chief Governor of *Egypt*.

(*h*) *Zaphnath-panneah*, that is, *Revealer of Secrets*. It was cuſtomary for Princes to give Foreigners a new Name, to denote their Naturalization, to take away all invidious Diſtinction and declare them worthy of their moſt intimate Favour. See *Dan.* i. 7.

(*i*) Prieſt of *On*. The Word tranſlated Prieſt, ſignifies alſo the Friend and privy Counſellor of the King, and the *Chaldee*, renders it here, *Prince of On*. Some *Engliſh* Tranſlations render it *Prince* in the Text, and ſet *Prieſt* in the Margin; and the laſt Tranſlation to it, renders it *Prieſt* in the Text, and ſets *Prince* in the Margin.

(*k*) *Manaſſeh* or *Forgetfulneſs*, for ſaid he, *God hath made me forget all my Toil, and all my Father's Houſe*.

(*l*) *Ephraim*, or *Fruitful*, alluding the Words which immediately follow, *God hath cauſed me to be fruitful in the Land of my Affliction*.

Bowed,

well furniſhed with Proviſion, inſomuch that Application was made to *Pharoah* not only by his own Subjects, but Foreigners, for Bread and other Neceſſaries of Life.

The King referred all that applied to him to *Joſeph*, who opened the Store-houſes, and ſold to the *Egyptians* and others, in ſuch Quantities and at ſuch Rates as ſeemed to him moſt juſt and equitable.

The Famine having raged more than a Year in *Jacob*'s Country, ten of *Joſeph*'s Brethren, at the Inſtigation of their Father, came from *Canaan* to *Egypt* to buy Corn, as they felt the Effects of the Dearth more ſeverely than the *Egyptians*, who had Corn laid up in ſtore.

On their arrival, their Buſineſs neceſſarily brought them before *Joſeph*, who had the intire Superintendence of the Diſpoſal of the Corn: when they approached him therefore, they (*m*) bowed as a Token of Reverence to his dignified Office. *Joſeph* no ſooner ſaw them than he knew them to be his Brethren; but chuſing to try the Effect of Severity in bringing them to a due Senſe of their unnatural Behaviour towards him, abruptly demanded of them, whence they came? And on their replying, "From the Land of *Canaan* to buy Proviſions; he charged them with being Spies, who came thither to make Diſcovery of the (*n*) Nakedneſs of the Country.

They aſſured him they came upon no ſuch Deſign, but meerly to buy Corn; and to enforce their Declaration, added, (*o*) that they were all one Man's Sons, which had been twelve formerly, but now were there only ten, the youngeſt being with their Father, and the next to him dead.

But *Joſeph* ſtill inſiſted that they were Spies, and to try them, put the Charge upon this Iſſue. "Ye ſay, ſaid he, ye have a younger Brother, agree upon one of you to go and fetch him, and ye ſhall be kept in Priſon the mean Time, that I may be ſatisfied whether what ye ſay be true; otherwiſe as ſure as *Pharaoh* lives, I ſhall look upon you as Spies.

He then committed them to cuſtody for three Days, in order to conſult what was beſt to be done, and on the third Day adviſed them to comply with his Injunction; aſſuring them that he was actuated by the Fear of God: *This do and live, for I fear God:* and farther to aſſure them of his Unwillingneſs, that their Families ſhould ſuffer for their Faults, or that they ſhould ſuffer if they were innocent, he added, *If ye be true Men, let one of your Brethren*

(*m*) Bowed, &c. Thus was fulfilled the firſt of *Joſeph*'s Dreams, concerning the Subjection of his Brethren to him, in future Times.

(*n*) Nakedneſs. That is to obſerve the Fortifications, and remark the Weakneſs or Nakedneſs of the Land. *Herodotus* obſerves that *Joſeph*'s Brethren entered *Egypt* thro' thoſe Paſſages, by which alone it was liable to be invaded.

(*o*) That they were all one Man's Sons, &c. As if they had ſaid, "We are no Spies, but all the Sons of one Man, and ſurely it cannot be ſuſpected that any Perſon would ſend all his Children on ſo dangerous a Deſign.

Brother,

be bound in the Houſe of your Priſon; go ye, carry Corn for the Famine of your Houſes, but bring your youngeſt Brother unto me, ſo ſhall your Words be verified, and ye ſhall not die.

Being reduced to a State of Extremity, and knowing it vain to remonſtrate with one, under whoſe immediate Power they were, they unanimouſly agreed to the Propoſal; while their preſent Situation reminded them of the State of their Brother, who might probably be dead, or under miſerable Circumſtances; and they began to reproach one another with the ſame, in Terms to this Effect, "Juſtly do we now ſuffer for our Cruelty to our Brother, to whom we refuſed Mercy, tho' he begged it in the Anguiſh of his Soul, therefore God is juſt in ſending upon us this Diſtreſs."

Reuben now took Occaſion to remind them of the Conſequence of their not attending to his Deſire and Advice; *Spake not I unto you, ſaying, Do not ſin againſt the Child, and ye would not hear? therefore behold alſo his Blood is required.* It is to be obſerved, that *Joſeph* before had ſpoken to them by an Interpreter; and they therefore knew not that he underſtood their Language; but now as he heard and underſtood their Diſcourſe, though the Interpreter was abſent, he was ſo affected with their Caſe, that he was obliged to withdraw, that unſeen, he might give Way to his affectionate Tears.

When he returned to them again, he cauſed *Simeon* to be bound in their Sight, and having ſet the reſt at Liberty, ordered their Sacks to be filled with Corn, and every Man's Money to be put in his Sack; he then diſmiſſed them.

When they come to the Inn, where they ſojourned the firſt Night; one of them opening his Sack to give his Aſs Provender, obſerved his Money in the Mouth of it, and being ſurprized, acquainted his Brethren with the unexpected Event. When they beheld the Money, they looked confuſedly at one another, and eſteeming this an additional Judgment of God upon them, cried out, *What is this that God hath done unto us?* In due time however through the Clemency and Kindneſs of their unknown Brother, they reached the much deſired Land *Canaan*.

CHAP. XI.

Joſeph's *Brethren relate to their Father the Particulars of their Adventures.* Jacob *is with much Difficulty prevailed on to ſend Benjamin into* Egypt. Joſeph's *Brethren arrive in* Egypt, *and are kindly entertained by him.* Joſeph's *Device to prolong the Stay of his Brethren. He at length makes himſelf known to them, and ſends for his aged Father, who is rejoiced at the News of ſo unexpected an Event.*

THE Sons of *Jacob* being arrived at the Habitation of their venerable Father, with eagerneſs of Impatience told him the Particulars of their Journey, but eſpecially the Reception they had met from the Viceroy of *Egypt*; who, having charged them

with being Spies, and they being wholly incapable in a ſtrange Country of clearing themſelves, had obliged then to leave *Simeon* behind in priſon, as a Pledge, till they ſhould bring *Benjamin*, on which Terms alone their Innocence could be juſtified, or they obtain Liberty of carrying on any Traffic in the land of *Egypt*.

This News greatly affected the good old Patriarch, who was already bereft of two of his Children, and now on the Point of loſing his youngeſt Son *Benjamin*. To increaſe his Concern, when they emptied their Sacks, every Man's Money was found in his Sack, from whence they all feared, that this Circumſtance might afford freſh Matter of Accuſation and hinder their clearing themſelves of the Charge alledged againſt them. But the Caſe was urgent; *Reuben* therefore to prevail with his Father to conſent to the Departure of *Benjamin*, deſired him to commit the Care of this darling Child to him, engaging on the Penalty of loſing his own two Children, to reſtore him in ſafety.

But this Propoſal had little Weight with the affectionate Patriarch, who anſwered him in a Manner remarkably pathetic, and which paints him to us in an Attitude of Grief, lamenting the Loſs of his Children in the moſt melting Terms of paternal Fondneſs, *My Son ſhall not go down with you, for his* (p) *Brother is dead, and he is left alone; if Miſchief befall him by the Way in the which he go, then ſhall ye bring down my gray hairs with Sorrow to the Grave.*

In this State of Doubt and Perplexity they paſſed their Time, till their Stock being exhauſted, their Father deſired them to repair to *Egypt* in order to repleniſh, taking no Notice of the Injunction the Viceroy had laid upon them, not to preſume to approach him more without their Brother *Benjamin*.

His Sons knowing that their Departure without him would not only argue in them the greateſt Folly and Raſhneſs, but alſo expoſe them to the Reſentment of the ſecond Perſon in the Kingdom; and at the ſame Time. thinking it impoſſible to bring their Father to conſent, were reduced to the utmoſt Dilemma. *Reuben* had tried his Efforts in vain; *Judah* therefore addreſſed him in more poſitive Terms, urging at once the abſolute and indiſpenſable Neceſſity of carrying *Benjamin* with them; "as the Viceroy had moſt ſolemnly declared, they ſhould not ſo much as ſee his Face, if they brought not their Brother *Benjamin* with them."

The poor old Man, thus reduced to a Straight, in the Fullneſs of his Soul, reproves his Sons for acquainting the Man that they had a Brother. And they in Excuſe told him, "that he enquired ſo minutely into their Circumſtances and Family, that they could not poſſibly avoid it: nay, he

(p) Brother, &c. His only Brother, by the Mother *Rachel*, his beloved Wife. *Joſeph* and *Benjamin*, being the only Children deſcended from *Rachel*.

even aſked, if they had another Brother, and whether their Father was living; and added moreover, that they had no Reaſon to ſuppoſe he would have obliged them to bring their Brother with them."

Judah now obſerving his Father in ſome kind of Doubt, repeats the Neceſſity of their Return, and forcibly urges him to conſent; *Send the Lad with me, and we will ariſe and go, that we may live and not die, both we and thou, and alſo our little Ones: I will be Surety for him, of my Hand ſhalt thou require him, if I bring him not unto thee, and ſet him before thee, then let me bear the Blame for ever.*

Affection at length ſubmitted to Neceſſity, which wrought the good old Man into Compliance; he therefore adviſed them, *as it muſt be ſo*, to take ſome of the moſt valuable Commodities of the Country, ſuch as Balm, Spices, Myrrh and Almonds, together with double Money in their Sacks (leſt the Price of what they had already brought away ſhould be demanded) and their Brother *Benjamin*; adding, for their Succeſs, this fervent and pious Prayer, *And God Almighty give you Mercy before the Man, that he may ſend away your other Brother, and* Benjamin. And taking his leave of them, affectionately ſaid, *If I be bereaved of my Children, I am bereaved.*

Thus patiently acquieſcing with the Will of Heaven, he diſmiſſed them, who according to his Advice, having taken double Money, a Preſent to appeaſe the incenſed Viceroy; and their Brother *Benjamin*, departed, being animated with the Hope of appearing in *Egypt* with Honour and Credit.

Immediately on their Arrival, they were preſented to the Viceroy, who obſerving his favourite *Benjamin* among them, commanded his Steward, to conduct them into the Houſe, and provide ſuitable Entertainment, as he intended they ſhould dine with him. In Obedience to his Maſter's Command, the Steward conducted them in, and obſerving their Fear, inquired the Cauſe, and when they told him it aroſe from a Suſpicion, that they were detained for the Sake of the Money which was left in their Sacks at their late departure: He bid them fear nothing, for it was their God and the God of their Fathers, who had put that Treaſure into their Sacks, and in order to comfort them, brought forth their Brother *Simeon*, and gave Orders for them to be treated with the utmoſt Civility.

As the Steward had informed them they were to dine with the Viceroy, they prepared their Preſents, which when he entered they offered with the loweſt Proſtration.

Joſeph ſaluted them with the utmoſt Cordiality, anxiouſly enquiring concerning the Welfare of the good old Man. They ſubmiſſively replied; *thy Servant our Father is in good Health, he is yet alive.* Though *Joſeph* addreſſed his Brethren in general Terms, his Attention was chiefly fixed upon his Brother *Benjamin*, who was moſt near and dear to him; he therefore inquired of them, if he was the younger Brother, whom they had mentioned?

tioned? And without waiting for an Anſwer, thus ſaluted him; *God be gracious unto thee, my Son.* His Affection was now wrought to ſuch a Pitch, that unable to contain the Flood of Tears that was ready to guſh; he retired haſtily into his Chamber, in order to give vent to the Exceſs of his Paſſion.

When he had dried his Tears, and waſhed his Face, that it might not appear that he had wept, he returned to them very chearfully, and ordered the Proviſion to be brought upon Table. *Joſeph* on account of his exalted Station, ſat by himſelf, proviſion having been prepared for his Brethren by themſelves, and alſo for the *Egyptians*, who were to dine with him by themſelves, for the *Egyptians* diſdained (q) to eat with the *Hebrews*, who were employed in the humble State of a paſtoral Life.

The Brethren were placed in rank exactly according to their reſpective Ages, a Circumſtance, which not a little (r) ſurprized them: thus placed, *Joſeph* ſent each of them a Meſs from his own Table; but to *Benjamin* he ſent a Meſs containing fives Times as much as any of the reſt; however they were all refreſhed and chearfully regaled. *Jacob's* Sons, being thus cordially received, and generouſly entertained, had reaſon to baniſh their Fears and encourage their Hopes; but a Cloud yet hung over them; for though *Joſeph* from his ardent Love towards his Brother *Benjamin* immediately deſired to make himſelf known; yet he deferred it ſome Time longer, in order to accompliſh a Scheme, that might again perplex and remind them of the cruel Manner in which they had formerly treated him, as well as try their Affection towards his darling Brother *Benjamin*.

To effect this Deſign, he ordered his Steward to fill their Sacks with Corn, and to put every Man's Money in his Sack; but to put into the Sack of the youngeſt, not only his Money, but the Silver Cup, out of which he uſed to drink. This done, early the next Morning they proceeded on their Journey homeward, but were not far advanced, when *Joſeph* ordered his Steward to purſue, and reproach them with the higheſt Ingratitude, in carrying off the particular Cup, out of which his Lord drinketh, and (s) divineth.

(q) To eat, &c. The enmity which ſubſiſted between the *Egyptians* and *Hebrews*, aroſe not, as ſome have imagined from the Latter's eating Animal Food, but from their low Degree in Life, being *Shepherds*, an Employment, though eſteemed by the *Hebrews*, was deſpiſed by the *Egyptians*.

(r) Surprized them. As they knew not their Brother *Joſeph*, they might well marvel, by what Means he could attain to ſo exact a Knowledge of their reſpective Ages.

(s) Divinth. As this was a common drinking Cup, and not one uſed in Libations and Divinations, is expreſly aſſerted; it follows therefore that the Word tranſlated, *divineth*, is improperly rendered; if it will admit of any other Acceptation: and that it doth admit of another Acceptation, appears from *Gen.* xxx. 27, and 1 *Kings* xx. 33. in both which Places it ſignifies, to try, ſearch, or make Experiment. The Senſe then in this Place muſt be, that it was a trial of their Honeſty, or rather an Experiment or Proof of their Diſhoneſty.

Conſcious of their Innocence, they were not affected by the Charge, and as a Teſt of their Integrity, reminded the Steward of their bringing back the Money which they found in the Mouths of their Sacks; nay, ſo confident were they of their Probity, that to obviate even a Suſpicion, they offered to ſtand Search under the ſevereſt Penalties: *With whomſoever of thy Servants it be found, both let him die, and we alſo will be my Lord's Bond-men.*

The Steward took them at their Word, but ſoftened the Penalty, fixing it, that he on whom the Cup ſhould be found, ſhould be his Servant, and the reſt *(t)* blameleſs.

Impatient to prove their Innocence, every one haſtily unloaded his Beaſt, and as they opened their Sacks, the Steward ſearched them, and beginning at the eldeſt, and proceeding on to the youngeſt, found the Cup in *Benjamin*'s Sack.

Here was an abſolute Conviction without the Shadow of Guilt; yet in vain did the poor Youth pretend to a Defence againſt evident Demonſtration. *Benjamin*'s Life, at leaſt his Liberty, was forfeited by mutual Agreement. They rent therefore their Clothes, and without attempting even to palliate the Fact, loaded their Aſſes, and returned to the City.

Joſeph had remained at Home, expecting the Event, and when they approached his Preſence, they fell to the Ground in a moſt ſorrowful Submiſſion.

Without giving them Time to offer a Word in their own Defence, *Joſeph* charged them with the Fact, and their Folly in committing it without the leaſt Proſpect of Concealment; *What Deed is this ye have (u) done?* Wot ye not that ſuch a Man as I can *(w)* certainly divine? In the midſt of a general Horror, *Judah*, in an humble Tone, cries out to this Effect, "We have nothing to offer in our Defence; God hath detected our Iniquity, and we muſt remain Slaves with him in whoſe Sack the Cup was found."

Joſeph interrupted him by declaring, that he could by no Means do ſuch injuſtice; for that he only who ſtole the Cup ſhould be his ſlave, while the reſt of them ſhould return home to their Father.

Judah finding the Viceroy ſomewhat ſoftened, was encouraged to approach him nearer, and repreſented to him, in a very pathetic Manner, the Caſe between them and their Father, relative to their bringing their Brother *Benjamin* into *Egypt*, paſſionately deſcribing the old Man's extraordinary Affection for this Child of his Age; the Regret with which he parted

(*t*) Blameleſs. The *Hebrew* Word, ſignifies *innocent* or *faultleſs*.

(*u*) Wot ye not, &c. The Word *wot* is derived from the Saxon *witan to know*, it ſhould therefore be rendered, according to the preſent Mode of Writing, *Know ye not?*

(*w*) Certainly divine. "Know ye not that I can certainly divine?" as if he had ſaid, "You ſee by my Office, that I am one of the great Miniſters of State; while the other Diviners are preferred only from the College of Prieſts; as I am therefore ſo ſuperior to them could you be inſenſible that it was in my Power to divine, or detect your Robbery?"

Doubt,

from him, the inconſolable Loſs that would reſult from his being detained, and the Curſes he would pronounce on them in his departing Moments, for depriving him of what he held moſt dear."

To this ſtriking Repreſentation he added, *Now therefore I pray thee, let thy Servant abide, inſtead of the Lad, a Bond-man to my Lord, and let the Lad go up with his Brethren; for how ſhall I go up to my Father, and the Lad be not with me? leſt peradventure I ſee the Evil that ſhall come on my Father.*

This pathetic Addreſs ſtruck *Joſeph* to the very Soul. Ordering therefore all the reſt to depart, that he might diſcover himſelf with more affectionate Freedom; he burſt into Tears, and pathetically exclaimed, *I am* Joſeph; *Doth my Father live?* ——— What a beautiful Tranſition! His Soul was ſo full of filial Affection for the good old Man, that before he had finiſhed his Sentence, he enquired after him, tho' they had before told him he was alive.

Conſcious Guilt, at the very Name of that *Joſeph*, whom they had ſo unnaturally treated, ſtruck them dumb, as they now dreaded the Power he had to reſent the Injuries they had done him. But Brotherly Love overcame Reſentment, and baniſhed every Deſire of Revenge; for *Joſeph* obſerving the Confuſion of his Brethren, in the moſt endearing Accents bids them approach, aſſuring them, he was the very Brother they had ſold into *Egypt*; and though he had aſſumed the Dignity becoming his Office, he ſtill retained the Tenderneſs of a Brother; and leſt their Fear ſhould prevail, he deſired them no longer to afflict themſelves with Remorſe for their former Behaviour towards him, ſince it was the Means by which a wiſe Providence was pleaſed to diſpoſe of him for their Preſervation.

He then propoſed that they ſhould bring his Father, and the whole Family of *Iſrael* out of *Canaan* into *Egypt*; and as an Inducement to them to leave their own Country, deſired them from him to addreſs their Father to this Effect; "God hath made me Lord of all *Egypt*, therefore defer not coming; for I will provide *(x) Goſhen* for the Place of thy Habitation, and there will I nouriſh thee and thy Family, leſt they come to Want."

Leſt they might *(r)* doubt that he was indeed their Brother *Joſeph*, he told them, *Your Eyes ſee, and the Eyes of my Brother* Benjamin, *(whom my Father will eſpecially regard) that it is I myſelf that ſpeak to you. And to comfort my Father, tell him of my Glory here, and all that you have ſeen; and make Haſte and conduct him hither.*

(x) *Goſhen*: This was the moſt fruitful Part of all *Egypt*, eſpecially for Paſturage; and therefore the moſt commodious for them, who were brought up Shepherds.

(r) Doubt. *Joſeph* having before ſpoken to them by an Interpreter, he bids them obſerve that now he ſpoke to them in the *Hebrew* Tongue, they might the better be aſſured that it was he their Brother that had hitherto converſed with them.

Beerſheba

Then taking *Benjamin* in his Arms, they wept for Joy; and, as a Seal of Pardon for all Offences, he tenderly embraced, kiſſed them ſeverally, and wept over them. *Joſeph*'s kind Carriage and Reconciliation having diſpelled their Fears and Apprehenſions of the ſevere Reſentment they might juſtly have expected from him, they took Heart, and converſed familiarly with him.

The Report of the Arrival of *Joſeph*'s Brethren ſoon ſpread in *Pharaoh*'s Court, which, for the great Reſpect all had to *Joſeph*, was very agreeable to the King and all about him; who immediately orders *Joſeph* to ſend his Brethren to conduct his Father, and all that belonged to him, into *Egypt*, where he ſhould ſhare of the beſt during the Famine, of which there were five Years to come.

Joſeph gladly obeys, and accordingly provides Carriages and Food for their Journey. But for a Preſent to his Father, he ſent ten Aſſes laden with the choiceſt Dainties *Egypt* afforded, and ten She Aſſes laden with Corn and Proviſions for him by the Way. To chear his Brethren, and confirm his Love to them, he gave to each of them Changes of Raiment; but to diſtinguiſh *Benjamin* from the reſt, he gave him three hundred Pieces of Silver, and five Changes or Suits of Clothes: And knowing their quarrelſome Diſpoſition, and fearing they ſhould enter into ſome Debate who was moſt in Fault for the Injury done to him, he lays a ſtrict Charge upon them, not to fall out by the Way.

Joſeph having diſmiſſed his Brethren, they make the beſt of their Way to *Canaan*, where they were joyfully received by their good old Father, eſpecially upon the Return of his two Sons, *Simeon* and *Benjamin*, whom he ſcarce expected to ſee again. But when they acquainted him with *Joſeph*'s being alive, and the Grandeur he lived in, his former Grief revived, and diſtruſting the extravagant Account they gave, he had like to have died: But when he ſaw the Carriages with the Preſents and Proviſions *Joſeph* had ſent for him, his fainting Spirits, like an Oil-ſpent Lamp opportunely ſupplied, revived, and in an Ecſtaſy of Joy, he cried out, "This is beyond my Expectation: My Son *Joſeph* yet alive; I will go and ſee him before I die." Accordingly he took his Journey with all that he had; and ſtopping at (*s*) *Beer-ſheba*, he offered Sacrifice to the God of his Father *Iſaac*. Here it was God ſpake to *Iſrael* in the Viſions of the Night, bidding him fear not to go down into (*t*) *Egypt*, for he would there make of

(*s*) *Beer-ſheba*. Here it was, where the Lord appeared to his Father *Iſaac*, and bleſſed him, and where his Father built an Altar, and worſhipped the Lord, *Gen.* xxvi. 23, 24, 25. But by *Jacob*'s offering Sacrifice here, it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed that ſo religious a Man as he was, not only gave God Thanks for the Preſervation of his Son *Joſeph*, and ſafe Return of his other Sons, but implored the divine Protection and Bleſſing upon him and his in the Journey he had now undertaken.

(*t*) *Egypt*. Though God had promiſed the Land of *Canaan* to *Iſrael*'s Poſterity, yet he perſuades him to go into *Egypt* (tho' a Country where his Anceſtors had been ill treated) for he would protect him.

Bring,

him a great Nation; that he would go with him, and ſurely (*u*) bring him thence again, and that his beloved *Joſeph* ſhould there (*w*) cloſe his Eyes.

Jacob encouraged by this Divine Promiſe left *Beer-ſheba*, and chearfully purſues his Journey towards *Egypt*; his Sons carrying with them their Little-ones and their Wives in the Waggons which *Pharaoh* had ſent to convey them.

They took alſo with them their Cattle, and their Goods, which they had gotten in *Canaan*, and came into *Egypt*, *Jacob*, his Sons and his Sons Sons, his (*x*) Daughters and his Sons Daughters, making in all (*y*) ſeventy Perſons.

Jacob being arrived on the Borders of *Egypt*, diſpatches his Son *Judah* before him, to receive Directions for going to *Goſhen*; who ſoon returns to his Father, and conducts him thither; where *Joſeph* with a Train becoming his high Station meets him, and with infinite Satisfaction congratulates his happy Arrival in a Place where he had Power to make the reſt of his Life eaſy and comfortable.

Here were the higheſt Ecſtaſies of Filial Duty and Parental Affection expreſſed: Tears of Joy flowed on both Sides; and whilſt *Joſeph* was contemplating the Divine Goodneſs that had reſtored him once more to the Sight of his aged Father, the pious Patriarch thinking his Joy on Earth compleat, deſired to live no longer: "Now, *ſays he*, let me die, ſince I have ſeen thy Face."

CHAP. XII.

Joſeph *introduces his Father and Brethren to the King, who receives them graciouſly, and appoints them ample Maintainance.* Jacob's *Charge.* *He bleſſes* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh, *the children of* Joſeph. *Bleſſes his Sons in particular, and having given them Charge concerning his Burial, dies.* Jacob's *Burial.* Joſeph *predicts the Return of his Brethren and dies.*

AFTER theſe mutual Indearments, *Joſeph* propoſes to his

(*u*) Bring, &c. That is, not that he ſhould live to come out of *Egypt*, but that his Body ſhould be carried from thence to be buried in the Sepulchre of his Anceſtors, and that his Poſterity ſhould poſſeſs the Promiſed Land, from which he was departed. For as to *Iſrael*'s dying in *Egypt*, it's plain, that God at the Time of this Viſion told him he ſhould die there, *Gen.* xlvi. 4. for there *Joſeph* is promiſed to cloſe his Eyes.

(*w*) *Cloſe.* From hence *Jacob* might juſtly infer that he ſhould die a natural Death, and that his Son *Joſeph* ſhould be with him to the laſt Moment of his Life; which was a great Comfort to the fond old Patriarch.

(*x*) *Daughters.* This will admit of a two-fold Meaning: Firſt, As it was a general Way of ſpeaking, ſuch as *Sarah* uſed when ſhe ſaid, *Who ſhould have ſaid to* Abraham *that* Sarah *ſhould have given Suck to Children?* *Gen.* xxi. 7. whereas ſhe never gave Suck but to one Child, *Iſaac*. Secondly, Though *Jacob* ſtrictly had but one Daughter, which was *Dinah*, yet here he may be underſtood to ſpeak of his Daughters-in-Law.

(*y*) The Names of *Jacob*'s Family, which he brought with him into *Egypt*, are particularly expreſſed, *Gen* xlvi. 8. to 25. And both here and *Deut.* x. 22. are computed to be in the whole Number threeſcore and ten Perſons.

Sixth

Father and Brethren that he would acquaint the King with their Arrival; which he was in Gratitude, obliged to do, ſince the King had ſent for them, inſtructing them at the ſame Time that he would acquaint him with their Manner of Life, which was in breeding and nouriſhing Cattle, that if he ſhould inquire of them what Occupation they were bred to, they ſhould anſwer accordingly; by which they would ſecure the Land of *Goſhen* for their Uſe, where they might live and take Care of their Flocks and Herds by themſelves; for the *Egyptians* did ſo abominate Shepherds, that they would never ſuffer them to live promiſcuouſly amongſt them.

Taking therefore five of the moſt graceful Perſons of his Brethren, he went and acquainted *Pharaoh* that his Father and Family were arrived in *Goſhen*, and preſented the five he had brought with him to the King, who treated them reſpectfully for *Joſeph*'s Sake; and demanding what they were bred to, they, according to their Inſtructions anſwer'd, that they were Shepherds, and humbly begged Leave to ſettle in *Goſhen*. The King turning to *Joſeph* told him, *The whole Land is at thy Diſpoſal, place them in the beſt Part of it, in* Goſhen, *if they like that beſt; and if there be any among them of extraordinary Skill in their Way, let them have the Care and Management of my Cattle.*

Joſeph's Project thus happily ſucceeding, he introduces his Father to the King, whom *Jacob* reverently ſalutes. The King graciouſly condeſcending to talk with him, inquires his Age; who tells him he was an hundred and thirty Years old, though his Anceſtors had lived to a greater Age.

Then taking Leave of *Pharaoh*, *Joſeph* placed his Father and his Brethren in *Rameſes*, a City afterwards of *Goſhen*, which was the moſt fertile Part of *Egypt*, where he nouriſhed them, and provided for them according to their Families, with that Care and Tenderneſs, as if they had been his Children.

Good old *Iſrael* and his Family being thus happily diſpoſed, *Joſeph* returns to his Charge. And now the Famine increaſing, People from all Parts of *Egypt* and *Canaan* repair to *Joſeph*, who furniſhed them with Proviſions as long as their Money held out; by which Means he had collected all the Money in the Land, and brought it into the King's Exchequer. And when their Money failed, they brought their Cattle, and he gave them Bread in exchange for them.

Thus they went on till the *(z)* ſixth Year, and then the Famine preſſed them ſo hard, that they were forced to lay their Condition before him, telling him, that their Money was ſpent, and he having got their Cattle already, they had now nothing left to offer

(z) *Sixth.* This generally is tranſlated the ſecond Year; but it muſt not be underſtood to be the ſecond Year of the ſeven Years of Famine, but the ſecond from the Time that their Money failed, which was indeed the ſixth of the ſeven, *Gen.* xlvii. 18.

him but their Bodies and Lands, which they beſought him in Pity to accept, or elſe they muſt periſh.

Joſeph took them at their Word, and in the King's Name, and for his Uſe, bought all the Land of *Egypt*, except the Land of the Prieſts, who having an Allowance from the King, were not compelled to part with their Poſſeſſions. But the reſt of the *Egyptians* ſold their Eſtates: and thus the Land became intirely the King's.

Then *Joſeph* repeating the Condition of the Bargain, tells them; *Behold, I have this Day bought both you and your Land for* Pharaoh. *Now here is Seed for you, and ye ſhall* (a) *ſow the Land. But upon theſe Terms ſhall you hold your Land: Ye ſhall every Year give the fifth Part of your Increaſe to* Pharaoh, *and the other four Parts ſhall be your own for Seed, and for Food for yourſelves and Families.*

Thus *Joſeph* ſettled it a ſtanding Law all over *Egypt*, that *Pharaoh* ſhould have the fifth Part of the yearly Increaſe of the Lands, except the Lands of the Prieſts. As for the common People, *Joſeph* (b) removed them from the Places of their conſtant Abode to a greater Diſtance, whereby they in Time knew not where to claim.

Thus the *Egyptians* ſaved their Lives at the Loſs of their Eſtates and Liberties, and of Freemen became Bondmen; in which Condition they yet rejoiced, and gratefully acknowledged *Joſeph*'s Care, calling him their Preſerver: and to ſhew how willingly they ſubmitted to theſe Terms, which the Sons of Liberty and Property would inveigh againſt as inſupportable, to aſſure their Prince, notwithſtanding this, of their Duty and Loyalty, they unanimouſly cry out to *Joſeph*, *Let us find Favour in thy Sight* [that thoſe Conditions may be ratified] *and we will be the King's Servants.*

The ſeven Years of Famine were ſucceeded by plentiful and ſeaſonable Years, the Earth reſuming its former Fertility, and the whole Land abounding in all the uſual Productions of Nature. Twelve of theſe Years of Plenty *Jacob* lived to ſee; at the End of which Nature's Lamp grew dim, and near extinguiſhed in him; his decayed Spirits warn him of approaching Fate, and each drooping Faculty beats an Alarm to Death.

He therefore ſends to his Son *Joſeph*, and obliges him by an Oath to bury him in the Sepulchre of his Fathers, which *Joſeph* ſwears to do. Upon this *Jacob* bowed himſelf to God, who,

(a) Sow. This being the laſt Year of the ſeven barren Years, they might ſow in Hopes of Plenty again.

(b) Removed. This *Joſeph* probably did, with Intent, that by ſo diſplacing and unſettling them from their antient Seats and Demeſnes, and ſhifting them to and fro, one upon another's Land, but leaving none upon their own, he might the better confirm *Pharaoh*'s Title to the Whole.

Beſides, this changing of Habitations ſhewed they had nothing of their own, but received all of the King's Bounty.

Recounted

beſides all his other Mercies, had given him a freſh Aſſurance by *Joſeph*'s Promiſe and Oath, that he ſhould be carried out of *Egypt* into the promiſed Land.

Joſeph leaving his Father intirely ſatisfied in the Aſſurance he had given him, returns home; but is ſoon recalled by the ſad Meſſage of his Sickneſs. Whereupon he took his two Sons, *Manaſſeh* and *Ephraim*, and went to viſit him.

The feeble Patriarch ſummoneth all his Spirits, and exerts them ſo far as to ſit up in his Bed to receive his favourite Son. And when *Joſeph* came near him, he (*c*) recounted to him the Promiſe which God had made to him of the Land of *Canaan*; *God Almighty*, ſaid he, *appeared to me at* Luz, *in the Land of* Canaan, *and bleſſed me; and ſaid unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and make of thee a Multitude of People, and will give this Land to thy Seed for an everlaſting Poſſeſſion.*

Then taking *Joſeph*'s two Sons into a peculiar Participation of this Promiſe, he adopted them as his own immediate Offſpring; as for *Ruben* and *Simeon*, ſays he, they ſhall be mine, ſo as to become each of them Head of a diſtinct Tribe in *Iſrael*, and to enjoy the Privilege of Primogeniture in Right of their Father *Joſeph*, to whom the Birth-right was transferred from *Ruben*, becauſe of his inceſtuous Tranſgreſſion againſt his Father. But as for the Iſſue thou ſhalt beget after them, they ſhall be thine, and ſhall be called by the Name of their Brethren in their Inheritance. And going on, he gave *Joſeph* a ſhort Account of the Death and Burial of *Rachel* his Mother.

All this while that *Jacob* was talking with *Joſeph*, concerning himſelf and his Sons, he had not taken Notice that *Joſeph*'s Sons were with him, but ſpoke of them as if they had been abſent; till turning to *Joſeph*, and ſeeing ſomebody with him, tho' he could not well diſcern who they were (for his Eyes being dim with Age, and the Children ſtanding between their Father's Knees, he could not diſtinguiſh them) he aſked, Who are theſe? *Joſeph* as piouſly as directly anſwers, They are my Sons, whom God hath given me in this Place.

Then *Jacob* bids him bring them near him, that he might bleſs them. And kiſſing and embracing them, ſaid to *Joſeph*, in a Tranſport of Joy, *I was out of Hopes of ever ſeeing thy Face again, and now God hath doubled that Bleſſing; for he hath ſuffered me to live to ſee thee and thy Children.*

Joſeph placing the Children according to the Order of their Birth, had ſet *Manaſſeh* ſo as to receive the Bleſſing of his Father's Right-Hand, and *Ephraim* that of his Left, guiding his Hand at the ſame Time. But *Iſrael* ſtretching out his Right-Hand, laid it upon the Head of *Ephraim*, who was the younger, and his Left upon *Manaſſeh*'s Head; and he bleſſed *Joſeph* in bleſſing his Children, ſaying, *God*,

(*c*) Recounted. Perhaps *Joſeph* might not know of this before, he having been ſeparated from his Father's Family when he was but a Boy.

Angel

before whom my Fathers Abraham *and* Iſaac *did walk, the God which fed me all my Life-time, to this Day, and the* (d) *Angel which redeemed me from all Evils, bleſs the Lads. And let my* (e) *Name be named on them, and the Name of my Fathers, and let them grow into a Multitude in the midſt of the Earth.*

Joſeph was uneaſy that his Father laid his Right-Hand (which carried with it the Preference) on the Head of the youngeſt; and ſuppoſing it had been done through Inadvertency, he held up his Father's Hand to remove it from *Ephraim*'s to *Manaſſeh*'s Head, ſaying, *Not ſo, my Father; for this is the Firſt-born, therefore put thy Right-Hand upon his Head.*

But *Iſrael*, actuated by divine Direction, refuſed, ſaying, *I know it, my Son, I know it. He alſo ſhall become a People, and ſhall be great; but truly his younger Brother ſhall be greater than he, and his Poſterity ſhall become a Multitude.*

Then adding to his former Bleſſing, he ſaid, (f) *In thee ſhall* Iſrael *bleſs, ſaying, God make thee as* Ephraim, *and as Manaſſeh*; ſtill ſetting *Ephraim* before *Manaſſeh*.

Then finding himſelf grow weaker, he ſaid to *Joſeph*; *I am now near my End; but tho' I leave you, God ſhall be with you, and bring you again into the Land of your Fathers. And as for thee, my dear* Joſeph, *as a diſtinguiſhing Mark of my Love, I have given thee one* (g) *Portion above thy Brethren, which I took out of the Hand of the* Amorite, *with my Bow, and with my Sword.*

The Converſation hitherto was private, between *Jacob* and *Joſeph* only: But finding his End very near, he called for all his Sons together, that while he had Strength to deliver his Mind, he might take his Farewel of them; and not only diſtribute his Bleſſings among them, but foretel what ſhould befal them and their Poſterity in After-times. Then directing his Speech

(d) Angel. That is, Chriſt, who is called the Angel or Meſſenger of the Covenant, *Mal.* iii. 1.

(e) Name. That is, let them be reckoned into our Family, equally with the reſt of my Sons.

(f) *In thee, &c.* That is, when any of the People of *Iſrael* ſhall bleſs their Children, they ſhall ſay, *Be thou multiplyed as* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh *are multiplied.* From hence it was the Cuſtom in *Iſrael*, that Children ſhould be brought to Men eminent for Piety, that they might bleſs them, and pray over them: Thus they brought little Children to *Jeſus*. But when a Bleſſing was given by Impoſition of Hands, if it was to a Son, he that bleſſed, ſaid, *God make thee as* Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh; if it was to a Daughter, *God make thee as* Sarah *and* Rebecca.

(g) *Portion.* Since *Jacob* was ſo peaceable a Man, that he never, as we read of, engaged in any martial Enterprize, it may be inquired, How and when he took this Portion of Land, which he here gave to *Joſeph*, from the *Amorite* with his Sword and Bow, or by Force of Arms? Some refer it to that Act of *Simeon* and *Levi*, in deſtroying the Inhabitants of *Shechem*, *Gen.* xxxiv. But that cannot be: For, firſt, *Jacob* diſavowed that Act, and blamed them for it both then and now, *Gen.* xlvi. 5, 6, 7. Secondly, Thoſe People of *Shechem*, whom they ſlew, were not *Amorites*, but *Hivites*, deſcended from *Hivi*, the ſixth Son of *Canaan*, *Gen.* x, 17. whereas the *Amorites* came from the fourth Son of *Canaan*, v. 16. Others take theſe Words of *Jacob* to be ſpoken in a prophetick Senſe; foretelling what he in his Poſterity ſhould do: And through Aſſurance of Faith looking upon it as done, undertook to diſpoſe of a double Portion (appendant to the Birth-right of *Joſeph*, on whom he had conferred the Birth-right) to be poſſeſſed by his Poſterity.

to them ſeverally, he begins thus to the Eldeſt:

Reuben, thou art my Firſt-born, the Prime of my Strength, and by Right of Primogeniture waſt born to many Privileges and Prerogatives, in Superiority over thy Brethren, and in Power from the double Inheritance annex'd in Courſe to the Birth-right: But theſe thou haſt forfeited by defiling thy Father's (*b*) Bed.

(*i*) *Simeon* in courſe is next; but he is join'd with *Levi*, for that wicked Combination between them, in the Maſſacre of *Hamor* and his People. Of theſe therefore *Jacob* ſays, that they were Brethren in Iniquity: Inſtruments of Cruelty were in their Habitations: O my Soul come not into their Secrets; let not my Honour be united to their Aſſemblies; for in their Anger they ſlew a (*k*) Man, and in their cruel Rage they (*l*) digged down a Wall: Curſed be their Anger, for it was fierce; and their Wrath, for it was cruel. Thus did *Jacob* ſet forth their Offence in very aggravating Circumſtances, to which he pronounces a Sentence proportionate, I will (*m*) divide them in *Jacob*, and ſcatter them in *Iſrael*.

Jacob, having treated his three eldeſt Sons with ſome Severity, ſoftens his Stile, when he comes to (*n*) *Judah*; whoſe Name ſignifying Praiſe, it led him to a high Encomium of him.

Judah (ſaid he) thou art he whom thy Brethren ſhall praiſe for thy Strength

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(*b*) *Bed.* When *Jacob* heard that *Reuben* had lain with *Bilhah*, his concubinary Wife, *Gen.* xxxv. 22. the Text ſays that he took no farther Notice of it then; but now at his Death he reproaches him ſeverely with it, and gives it as the Reaſon for which he deprived him of the Privileges of Primogeniture.

(*i*) *Simeon.* *Reuben* having forfeited his Right of Primogeniture, it might be expected, that it ſhould have devolved upon *Simeon*, who was next: But for his Cruelty to *Joſeph* and the Idolatry of his Tribe in worſhiping *Baal peor*, *Numb.* xxv. the Prieſthood, which was the nobler Dignity of the Primogeniture, was tranſferred to *Levi*, the third Son; and the Kingdom, the other Part of the Primogeniture, to *Judah*.

(*k*) *Man.* This is by the Figure *Synecdoche*, put for all the Inhabitants of *Shechem*.

(*l*) *Digged*, &c. Meaning the Deſtroying and Spoiling the City.

(*m*) *Divide.* This dividing may be applied to *Simeon*, whoſe Tribe had not a diſtinct Lot aſſigned them in *Canaan*, as the other Tribes had; but they were thruſt within the Lot of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xix. 1. until in the Time of *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*, a Party of them ſmote the Remainder of *Amalek*, and ſeating themſelves in their Poſſeſſions. 1 *Chron.* iv. 24. were thereby divided from the reſt of their own Tribe. As for the Tribe of *Levi*, it was ſcattered through all the Tribes, having no peculiar Lot or Share of the Land as the other Tribes had.

(*n*) *Judah.* His Mother *Leah*, *Gen.* xxix. 35. at his Birth gave him that Name, in Gratitude and Thankfulneſs to God. But now his Father calls him ſo for another Reaſon, alluding to the Praiſe his Brethren ſhould give him; and that for many Reaſons; *viz.* 1. The Tribe of *Judah* was the Firſt that enter'd the *Red-ſea* after *Moſes*. 2. After the Death of *Joſhua*, the Tribe of *Judah* was pitch'd upon to be Commander in Chief of all the other Tribes, in their Wars, *Judg.* i. 3. From this Tribe ſprang the mighty and powerful King *David*, his Son King *Solomon*, and ſeveral other Kings till the *Babyloniſh* Captivity. 4. This Tribe waged War againſt the *Iſhmaelites*, *Idumeans*, *Moabites*, *Arabians*, and other neighbouring Nations. 5. From this Tribe deſcended *Zorobabel*, that commanded the People in their Return from *Babylon*. 6. And laſtly, from this Tribe ſprang Chriſt.

and Courage. Thou ſhalt put thy Enemies to Flight; thou ſhalt purſue them, lay hold of them, and deſtroy them: thy Father's Children ſhall (*o*) bow down before thee. And then wrapped up in the Contemplation of *Judah*'s Strength and Glory, he breaks forth into theſe elegant Allegories; *Judah* is like a (*p*) Lion's Whelp. From the Prey my Son thou art gone up. He ſtooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion, who ſhall dare to rouze him? Then deſcribing the Duration of his Government; The Scepter, ſaid he, ſhall not depart from *Judah*, nor a Law-giver be wanting of his Iſſue, till the *Meſſiah* come; and unto him ſhall the gathering of the People be. Then purſuing his Allegories, to ſet forth the Proſperity and Plenty of *Judah*'s Tribe, and the abundant Fruitfulneſs of its Soil, he added, Binding his Fole unto the Vine, and his Aſs's Colt unto the choice Vine, he waſhed his Garments in Wine, and his Cloaths in the Blood of Grapes: ſignifying that Wine ſhould with them be as plentiful as Water.

Jacob keeping ſtill in *Leah*'s Line paſſes by *Iſſachar* and takes *Zebulun*; whoſe Name ſignifying Dwelling, he only ſays of him, that he ſhall dwell at the Haven of the Sea; and that he ſhall be an Haven for Ships, and his Border ſhall be unto (*q*) *Zidon*.

Coming next to *Iſſachar*, he compares him to a ſtrong Aſs couching down between two Burdens; ſeated in a pleaſant and fertile Country; but being naturally ſlothful and puſillanimous, loved an inglorious Eaſe more than active Liberty and Bravery.

The good old Patriarch having gone thro' with *Leah's* Offspring, he takes the Handmaids Sons next, beginning with *Dan* Son of *Bilhah*, *Rachel*'s Handmaid. *Dan* ſignifying Judging, he ſaid, *Dan* ſhall (*r*) judge his People, as one of the Tribes of *Iſrael*; that is, though it was ſmaller, yet ſhould bear as much Authority as another. That it ſhould be like a (*s*) Snake on the Way, or an Adder in the Path, which bites the Horſes Heels, and makes them throw their Riders.

(*o*) Bow down. By this, tho' the Birthright was transferred from *Reuben* to *Joſeph*, 1 *Chron.* v. 1. with reſpect to the double Portion: Yet that Part of the Prerogative of Primogeniture, which concerned Authority, or Government over the reſt, is plainly conferred on *Judah*; and ſo it is explained here, 1 *Chron.* v. 2. For *Judah* prevailed above his Brethren, and of him came the chief Ruler, tho' the Birth-right was *Joſeph*'s, with reſpect to the Inheritance.

(*p*) Lion's Whelp. Here are gradually deſcribed by the Lion's Age, the Three Degrees of the State of this Tribe of *Judah*. The Firſt, its Infancy under *Joſhua*, The Second, its virile State under *David*. The Third, its confirmed State under *Solomon*

(*q*) *Zidon*. Accordingly this Lot came forth, *Joſh.* xix. 11.

(*r*) *Judge*. This was fulfilled in *Samſon*, yet was no more than *Iſſachar* did by *Tola*, *Judg.* x. 1. But it is ſuppoſed, the Reaſon why this was ſaid of *Dan*, was to ſhew that the Sons of the Handmaids (of which *Dan* is the firſt named) tho' as born of Bond-women, they were in that Reſpect inferior to the reſt of their Brethren, ſhould notwithſtanding obtain ſome Share in the Government.

(*s*) *Snake*. This ſeems to intimate that the *Danites* ſhould prevail more by Policy and Stratagem, than by open Force: Which *Samſon*'s Dealing with the *Philiſtines*, *Judge. Ch.* xiv. and xv. and the *Danites* taking *Laiſh*, *Ch.* xviii. confirms.

Here *Jacob* cried out, (*t*) I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.

When he ſpake of *Gad*, alluding alſo to his Name, he ſaid, A Troop ſhall overcome him: But he ſhall overcome at laſt. By which he is thought to have referred to what was afterwards performed by *Jephthah*, who was of this (*u*) Tribe.

Of happy *Aſher* he foretels, his Bread ſhall be rich, and Kings ſhould reckon it a Dainty; which denoted the exuberant Richneſs of Soil.

(*w*) *Naphtali*, ſays he, ſhall be like a Tree having Grafts, ſhooting out pleaſant Branches in its Generation.

And now he comes to his beloved *Joſeph*, on whom he expatiates very largely, thinking he cannot ſay enough of him.

Joſeph, ſays he, is like a fruitful Bough of a Tree planted near a Spring, whoſe (*x*) Branches run over the Wall.

And having thus ſet forth his future Greatneſs in his Poſterity, he looks back and recollects his paſt Troubles.

The (*y*) Archers, ſaid he, have ſorely grieved him, and ſhot at him, and hated him; but his Bow abode ſtrong, and his Hands and Arms were made ſtrong by the Hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. From thence is the

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(*t*) *I have.* Modern Interpreters are very ridiculouſly fanciful in the Application of this Text, diſtorting it to the moſt extravagant and contrary Meanings. There being no Context to make it out, it looks more like a recommendatory Ejaculation on the Death bed. But if we ſuppoſe ſomething more than ordinary impreſs'd the Patriarch's Spirit at this Time, might he not have ſome Senſe or Foreſight of the Miſchief the *Danites* afterwards brought upon themſelves, when having rifled *Micha's* Houſe, and robbed him of his Gods, they fell into open Idolatry? *Judg.* xviii.

(*u*) *Tribe*, *Judg.* xi.

(*w*) *Naphtali.* The Verſions generally confound the Animals that the Scripture ſpeaks of, or transform them into other Things, and ſometimes Trees or Plants into Animals. Thus here in *Gen.* xlix. 21. they make *Jacob*, propheſying of the Tribe of *Naphtali*, ſay, Naphtali *is a Hind let looſe, he giveth goodly Words.* Interpreters differ in nothing ſo much at this, even thoſe that are for it, confounding their own Opinion. —— The learned *Bochart* tranſlates the Words of the Original thus, Naphtali *ſhall be like a Tree having Grafts ſhooting out pleaſant Branches.* —— This ſeems to be moſt rational and natural, not only from the Words, but from the Senſe; if ye conſider, that *Jacob* compares this Tribe to a Tree, as he does that of *Joſeph* in the following Verſe; and as good Men are often compared to fine Trees, *Pſ.* i. 3.) and xcii. 12. either becauſe of their Fruitfulneſs, *Naphtali* having brought but 4 Children to *Egypt*, *Gen.* xlvi. 24. which in leſs than 215 Years produced more than Fifty Thouſand, *Num.* i. 42.) or upon the Account of the Fruitfulneſs of the Country which fell to their Lot, which *Moſes* and *Joſephus* repreſent as the richeſt of all *Judea*.

(*x*) Branches. By this rhetorical Amplification *Jacob* ſets forth the Strength of *Joſeph's* Family, and the large Extent of his twofold Tribe, *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, which at the firſt Numbering of the Tribes yielded of Men able to go forth to War threeſcore and twelve thouſand and ſeven hundred Men, (*Num.* i.) And at the ſecond Numbering, Fourſcore and five thouſand and two hundred (*Num.* xxvi.) far exceeding any other Tribe.

(*y*) Archers. Amongſt theſe Archers, his Brethren may undoubtedly claim the firſt Place: For they are expreſly ſaid to have hated him, *Gen.* xxxvii. 4. and to have increaſed their Hatred to him, *v.* 5. 8. to have conſpired his Death, *v.* 18. and afterwards to have ſold him, *v* 28. Next to them his lewd Miſtreſs, and, by her Means, his Maſter *Potiphar* may be reckoned among theſe Archers that ſorely grieved him.

Stones

Shepherd, the *(z)* Stone of *Iſrael*; to which thou waſt advanced by the God of thy Father, who ſhall help thee, and by the Almighty, who ſhall bleſs thee with the *(a)* Bleſſings of Heaven above, Bleſſings of the Deep that lieth under, Bleſſings of the Breaſts, and of the Womb.

Then adding, the Bleſſings of thy Father have prevailed above the Bleſſings of my Progenitors, unto the utmoſt Bounds of the *(b)* Everlaſting Hills. And then to center them all in *Joſeph*, he ſays, They ſhall be on the Head of *Joſeph*, and on the Crown of him that was ſeparated from his Brethren.

Jacob concludes with *Benjamin*, his youngeſt Son, of whom he ſaid, *Benjamin* ſhall be ravenous as a Wolf: In the Morning he ſhall devour the Prey, and at Night he ſhall divide the Spoil. in which Words he as aptly as briefly foretells the fierce and cruel Nature of that Tribe, exemplified, among other Inſtances, in that of the *(c) Levite*'s Concubine.

The good old Patriarch, having delivered himſelf thus to his Sons, gives them his Bleſſing, not according to his own natural Affection or Inclination, but according to the divine Direction then given him; and putting them in Mind of his Death, ſays, I am going to be gathered to my People, I charge you bury me with my Fathers in the Cave that is in the Field of *Ephron* the *Hittite*: which that they might not miſtake, he further deſcribes thus; In the Cave that is in the Field of *Machpelah*, which is before *Mamre* in the Land of *Canaan*, which *Abraham* bought with the Field of *Ephron* the *Hittite*, for a Poſſeſſion of a Burying-place. And to engage them the more to perform his Will in this, he tells them, There *Abraham* and *Sarah* his Wife were buried; there *Iſaac* and *Rebecca* his Wife were buried; and there I buried *Leah*. And to aſſure them of their Right to that Burying-place, he tells them further, That the Field and the Cave therein were purchaſed not only of *Ephron*, but of the Children of *Heth*.

Having thus given his laſt Charge

(z) Stone, So the laſt *Engliſh* Tranſlation has it, making the Shepherd and Stone ſynonymous. That of 1610. reads it, *of whom was the Feeder appointed by the Stone of* Iſrael; taking the Stone to be Chriſt, and the Shepherd of Feeder appointed by him to be *Joſeph*. But *Tremellius* and *Junius* make *Joſeph* to be both the Shepherd and the Stone, *viz.* of Refuge to *Iſrael*. There is an *Elliplis*, or Defect in the Sentence; which Interpreters ſupply, as they think beſt. However it be taken, undoubtedly *Jacob* had a Regard to *Joſeph's* conſtant reſiſting the Aſſaults of his Miſtreſs, and patiently bear the Severity of his Maſter, and likewiſe to his taking Care of and feeding both *Iſrael* and the *Egyptians*, and others, a Shepherd provides for his Flock.

(a) Bleſſings. Theſe were Terms comprehenſive of all outward Bleſſings.

(b) Everlaſting Hills. Which is a Term of Duration commonly uſed in Scripture: But *Deut.* xxxiii. 15. ſeems to explain this Text more directly, where *Moſes* repeating this very Bleſſing of *Jacob* on *Joſeph*, does not ſeem ſo much to regard the Compariſon of *Hills* in reſpect of Duration, as in Point of Bleſſing, which God more largely diſpenſed in Hills and Mountains.

(c) *Levite's*, &c. See *Judg.* xix. 20, 21.

to his Sons concerning his Funeral, he (*e*) laid his Feet on the Bed and quietly expired.

The Loſs of ſo good a Father muſt undoubtedly be very afflicting to ſo numerous a Family, whoſe chief Support depended on the Piety of him; yet we find none of *Jacob*'s Sons that paid the leaſt Demonſtrations of filial Affection and Duty with ſo much Devotion as the pious *Joſeph*. He could not ſee his aged Parent's Face, though dead, without kiſſing, and bathing it with his Tears. And having thus given vent to his Paſſion, he commanded his Servants the Phyſicians to (*f*) imbalm him; which accordingly they did. And when the uſual Time of Mourning was over, *Joſeph* intreated ſome of *Pharaoh*'s Courtiers (for as he was a Mourner, it was not proper for him to appear in his Preſence) to acquaint him, that his Father juſt before his Death had obliged him by an Oath, to bury him the Sepulchre of their Family in the Land of *Canaan*; and therefore to beg Leave of the King for him to go and bury his Father, upon Promiſe to come again. The King readily conſents, and *Joſeph* ſets forward, attended not only with his own and his Father's Family, but with the chief Officers of the Houſhold, and Nobility, who, to honour *Joſeph* and grace the Funeral, would bear him Company, partaking in all the Solemnity performed to the Memory of his deceaſed Father.

After ſome Travel they came to the Threſhing Floor of *Atad*, where they made a Halt; and *Joſeph* made a ſolemn Mourning for his Father ſeven Days together. The *Canaanites* who inhabited the Land, ſeeing the *Egyptians* mix themſelves in theſe Obſequies, were amazed, and thinking they had the greateſt Concern in this Funeral Lamentation, could not forbear ſaying, This is a grievous Mourning to the *Egyptians*: From whence the Name of that Place was called *Abel-Miſraim*, that is, the Mourning of the *Egyptians*.

This Solemnity being ended, they went on; and being come to the Field of *Machpelah*, which *Abraham* had bought for a Burying-place, they buried *Jacob* in the Cave there; And having thus performed *Jacob*'s Will they all returned to *Egypt*.

So long as *Jacob* lived, *Joſeph*'s Brethren knew themſelves ſecure; but now their Father was dead, their former Fear return'd, and ſuggeſted to them the juſt Revenge *Joſeph* might take of them for the former Miſeries they had occaſioned to him. Wherefore they conſulted together how to deprecate their Offence; which they ſoon agreed upon, and made their dead

(*e*) Laid. Whilſt *Jacob* was propheſying and bleſſing his Sons, he ſat on the Bed, his Feet hanging down; but when he had done talking to them and taken his Leave of them, he gathered his Feet into the Bed, and departed.

(*f*) Imbalm. This being the firſt Mention we have in Story of *Imbalming* the Dead, may well countenance a Suppoſition, that the *Iſraelites* here learning it of the *Egyptians*, and practiſing it afterwards on great and ſolemn Occaſions amongſt themſelves, as in 2 *Chron.* xvi. 14. and *John* xix. 40. it might from them come into uſe among Chriſtians.

Brethren,

Father, whoſe Memory they knew was very dear to pious *Joſeph*, their Advocate; and framing a Meſſage in *Jacob*'s Name, they ſent it to their Brother in theſe Words. Thy Father commanded us before he died, ſaying, *Thus ſhall ye ſay to* Joſeph: *Forgive I pray thee now the Treſpaſs of thy Brethren, and their Sin; for they did Evil unto thee; but pardon them, not only for my Sake, but becauſe they are the Servants of the God of thy Father.*

This Meſſage was artfully worded; for they, fearing that the ſuppoſed Requeſt of their dying Father might not be prevailing enough now he was dead, make God their Interceſſor. But there was no need of ſuch moving Arguments to *Joſeph*'s compaſſionate Temper: Their Diffidence of his Good-nature is as afflicting now, as their Offence was formerly to him. He wept at the Delivery of the Meſſage; and ſending for them, they falling down at his Feet in the moſt abject Manner, he tenderly diſmiſſes their Fears, and comforts them; *Revenge*, ſays he, *belongs to God, and I forgive you. For though ye deſigned Ill againſt me, yet God turned it to Good, making me, thro' your Malice, an Inſtrument under him to ſave much People alive, and you eſpecially, as is now evident. Therefore fear no Hurt from me; for I will protect and cheriſh you and your Families.*

Thus the pious *Joſeph* diſmiſſed his Brethren, with the Aſſurance that they ſhould always find in him an affectionate Brother, and a conſtant Friend.

Joſeph lived four and fifty Years after his Father's Death, having the Comfort of ſeeing himſelf the happy Parent of a numerous Offspring in his two Sons *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, to the third Generation.

And now finding himſelf near his End, he ſent for his *(g)* Brethren, and ſaid thus to them: *My Death is at Hand; but though I leave you, yet God will ſurely remember you, and bring you out of this Land, unto the Land which he ſware he would give to the Poſterity of* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob. *I charge you therefore, when God ſhall thus viſit you, and bring you out of this Land, that you carry up my Bones with you.*

This eminent Patriarch, having thus bound his Brethren by Oath, to convey his Remains to his native Land, departs this Life; and they in Compliance with his Injunction, embalmed his Body, and reſerved it in a Coffin, till the Prediction was fulfilled.

(g) *Brethren.* By Brethren we are not to underſtand the other eleven Sons of *Jacob*, who, except *Benjamin*, being all older than himſelf, might probably be all or moſt of them dead; but it muſt here be meant of the Heads of their Families: For in the Scripture Dialect all near Kinſmen go under the general Appellation of Brethren, as *Abraham* called *Lot*, *Gen.* xiii. 8. and *Ch.* xxiv. 27.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

A new King ſucceeding to the Egyptian *Throne, ſoon after the Death of* Joſeph, *the* Iſraelites *are grievouſly oppreſſed. The King's Orders to deſtroy their Male Children is not obeyed.* Moſes *is born, and brought up by* Pharaoh's *Daughter. Avenges the Cauſe of his Brethren. Is appointed Shepherd to* Jethro. *God appears to him, and appoints him to a ſpecial Embaſſy to the King of* Egypt.

UNHAPPILY for the *Iſraelites*, who were Strangers in the Land of *Egypt*; they had not long loſt *Joſeph*, who was their Succour and Support, before a new King ſucceeded to the Throne, who regarding them with a jealous Eye; and fearing their Power and Influence, as they were become very wealthy by Means of their Brother, ſummoned a Council, and laid before them the abſolute Neceſſity of checking theſe Strangers in their fortunate Career.

The Council unanimouſly agreed with their jealous Prince, in the Expedient he propoſed, which was to employ them in making Bricks, and building Store-Cities for *Pharaoh*. To gratify their Avarice as well as Cruelty, they propoſed not to reap the Profits of their Service, but by continual hard Labour to impoveriſh their Spirits, and infeeble their Bodies: therefore they ſet Taſk-Maſters to overſee and keep them to hard Labour, by which, and other ſervile Work, they made their Lives very uncomfortable.

But God ſupported them under their Severities: for the more the *Egyptians* oppreſſed them, the more they grew and multiplied, which increaſed their Jealouſy to a greater Degree of Cruelty, inſomuch that the King, to ſuppreſs their Growth, ſpoke to two of the *Hebrew* (*w*) Midwives, *Shiphrah*

(*w*) Midwives. The Criticks very needleſly, and with more Subtilty than Solidity, controvert Who theſe Midwives were? and whether they were *Hebrews* or *Egyptians*? Without Doubt they were *Hebrews*; and by the King of *Egypt*'s Application to them, the moſt celebrated of their Profeſſion.

Wild

and *Puah*, and gave them a ſtrict Charge, that when they ſhould be called to do their Office to the *Hebrew* Women, if the Child were a Son, they ſhould kill him; but if a Daughter, that ſhe ſhould live.

But theſe pious Women, fearing the Diſpleaſure of the Almighty King, rather than that of an Earthly Potentate, notwithſtanding the ſtrict Injunction, preſerved the Male Children; for which *Pharaoh* ſends for them, and in great Diſpleaſure reprimands their Neglect of his Edict. In Excuſe for which they tell him, That the *Hebrew* Women are not as the *Egyptian* Women, for they are like (*x*) wild Beaſts, delivered before the Midwives could come to them.

The Piety of the Midwives in preſerving the Male Children was ſo acceptable to God, that he is ſaid thereupon to deal well with the Midwives; and becauſe they feared God, he made them *(y)* Houſes. And by this Means the People multiplied, and grew mighty.

The King, whether ſatisfied or not, with this Anſwer of the Midwives, not finding it ſafe to truſt them any longer, reſolved upon a more effectual Method to extirpate the *Hebrews*; and therefore he gave (*z*) Charge to all his People, that every Son, that ſhould be born to the *Hebrews*, ſhould be thrown into the River.

This cruel Edict for drowning all the Male Children muſt needs be very afflicting to the *Hebrew* Parents, and put them upon many a thoughtful Contrivance to preſerve their Infants; of which an Inſtance ſoon followed; for one *Amram* of the Houſe of *Levi*, having married a Daughter of the ſame Family, named *Jochebed*, had by her a Daughter, whoſe Name was *Miriam*, and four Years after a Son, whom they called *Aaron*. About three Years after *Aaron*'s Birth *Jochebed*, was delivered of another Son, who being a Child of moſt elegant Beauty, ſomething ſupernatural and divine appearing in his Form, his Mother was the more ſolicitous for his Preſervation.

Having kept him concealed in her Houſe three Months; but not being able any longer to hide him, and fearing he might fall into the Hands of thoſe that were appointed to drown the Male Children, ſhe contrived a Way to ſave him, by making a little Boat of Bulruſhes, which ſhe daubed with Pitch and Slime, to keep the Water out; and putting the Child into it, ſhe laid it among the Flags, by the River Side, and ſet his Siſter *Miriam* at a Diſtance to obſerve what became of him.

(*x*) Wild Beaſts. The *Hebrew* Word *Chajoth*, which is in the Original, ſignifies not only Animals in general, but *Beaſts*, and even *Wild Beaſts*, as has been obſerved by learned Men, and may be ſeen in ſeveral Places of Scripture.

(*y*) Houſes. That is, he made them to proſper, gave them Children, and bleſſed their Families. The Word Houſe being uſually in Scripture taken for the offspring or Family of any one; as the Houſe of *Aaron*, *Judah*, *David*, *&c.* are put for the Family of *Aaron*, *Judah*, *David*, *&c.*

(*z*) Charge. This inhuman Edict is ſuppoſed by Commentators to be ſo abhorred by the *Egyptians*, that they ſcare ever put it in Execution; and that it was recalled immediately after the Death of *Amenopthis*, then King of *Egypt*, who enacted it; which Time *Euſebius* and others place in the fourth Year of *Moſes*.

Thur-

MOSES *in the* BULLRUSHES, Exod. II. 3.

But the Providence of God ſoon interpoſed in Behalf of the helpleſs Infant: for *(a) Thurmuthis*, *Pharaoh*'s only Daughter, coming to the River to bathe herſelf, her Maids looking for a Retirement for that Purpoſe, diſcovered the Boat, with the Child in it, which *Thurmuthis* commanding them to bring to her; ſhe no ſooner uncovered the Child, but it made its mournful Complaint to her in a Flood of Tears.

This unexpected Accident, and the extraordinary Beauty of the Child, moved the *Egyptian* Princeſs with Compaſſion, which ſhe expreſſed in an Accent of Pity, ſaying to this Effect, "This is ſome *Hebrew* Child, which the Parents have hid, to preſerve him from the King's cruel Edict."

By this Time *Miriam*, the Child's Siſter, had crowded herſelf in amongſt the Attendants of the Princeſs; and obſerving with what Tenderneſs ſhe looked upon the Child, very officiouſly offered her Service to procure an *Hebrew* Nurſe for him; which the Princeſs accepted: and the Girl haſtened away to her Mother, and brought her to the Place, where ſhe received the Child from the Princeſs, who engaged to pay her for her Care.

No Doubt but this was a welcome Bargain to the Mother, who taking the Child home with her, durſt now nurſe it openly, having a Royal Protection for his Security.

When he was grown big enough his Mother brought him to Court to ſhew him to the Princeſs, and ſatisfy her how he had improved under her Care. The Princeſs grew ſo fond of him, that ſhe adopted him for her *(b)* Son; and in Remembrance that ſhe had drawn him out of the Water, ſhe called his Name (*c*) *Moſes*; and to accompliſh him the more, ſhe keeps him at Court, where he is inſtructed in all the Learning and Diſcipline uſed among the *Egyptians*, both Civil and Military, and in all Things requiſite and becoming the Character and Quality of a Prince of the Blood.

Moſes being forty Years old left the Court, and went to ſee his Brethren; and when he reflected on the Oppreſſion they labour'd under, it affected him

(*a*) Thurmuthis. So *Joſephus* calls her; and from him *Philo*, who adds, that ſhe was the King's only Daughter and Heir; and that being ſome Time married, but having no Child, ſhe pretended to be big with Child and to be delivered of *Moſes*: whom ſhe owned as her natural Son. Agreeable to which is what the Apoſtle to *Heb.* xi. 24. ſays, That when *Moſes* was grown up, he ſcorned to be thought the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter. From whence it is plain he was eſteemed as ſuch. And if any one ſhould ask, why he did not in Right of his Mother ſucceed in the Kingdom? It may reaſonably be anſwered, That the Fraud of his adopted Mother, and his own Adoption, being detected he could pretend no Right to the Crown of *Egypt*.

(*b*) Son. The *Jews* obſerve, that whoever brings up a Pupil in his Houſe, is in Scripture ſaid to have begotten him. And thus it is ſaid, *Exod.* ii. 10. That *Moſes* was the Son of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, tho' ſhe had only taken care of his Education.

(*c*) Moſes. At his Circumciſion, ſays *Clement Alexandrinus*, his Parents call'd him *Joachim*, (that is, the Reſurrection of the Lord) from a preſaging Hope, that the Lord, thro' him, would raiſe up his People *Iſrael*, deliver them from the *Egyptian* Bondage they were then in, and bring them again to the promiſed Land.

with Compaſſion and Indignation to ſee the Servants of the moſt High God ſubjected to a Servitude exceeding that of Brutes. This was ſoon increaſed by an Opportunity that juſt then offered; which was an *Egyptian* ſtriking an *Hebrew*. This inflamed *Moſes*'s Zeal, who looking about to ſee whether any Man was within Sight, chaſtiſes the *Egyptian*, making him expiate his Barbarity to the injured *Hebrew* with his * Blood; and afterwards buried him in the Sand; ſuppoſing by his taking upon him thus to adminiſter Juſtice, that his Brethren would have (*e*) underſtood, that God by his Hand would have delivered them; but they underſtood him not. However, the next Day he went out, and ſhewed himſelf among them again; and finding two Men of the *Hebrews* quarrelling, he endeavoured to reconcile them, putting them in Mind that they were Brethren; and with ſome Smartneſs reprehending the Aggreſſor, he demanded for what Reaſon he thus attacked the other? The Fellow thruſting him away with Diſdain, replies; *Who made you a Prince and Judge over us? Do you intend to kill me, as you did the* Egyptian *Yeſterday? Moſes* was ſtartled at this, and to prevent the fatal Conſequence that would attend in reaching the Ears of the King, he left *Egypt*, a Circumſtance that ſtrongly proves his being immediately under the Divine Care; for *Pharaoh* ſoon heard of it, but *Moſes* was fled from his Dominions into the Land of *Midian*.

Here was the happy Place, and then the bleſſed Time when Majeſty guarded only with rural Innocence, ſubmitted to the humble Office of a Shepherd, and a Crook inſtead of a Sceptre graced the peaceful Monarch's Hand. Here *Jethro* firſt in Quality both of Prince and Prieſt enjoyed the Bleſſings of a quiet Reign, whoſe Daughters laid aſide the Diſtinction of their Birth to feed their Father's Flocks, and took more Delight in the innocent and uſeful Employment of tending their harmleſs Sheep, than in the luxurious Gaiety of a Court.

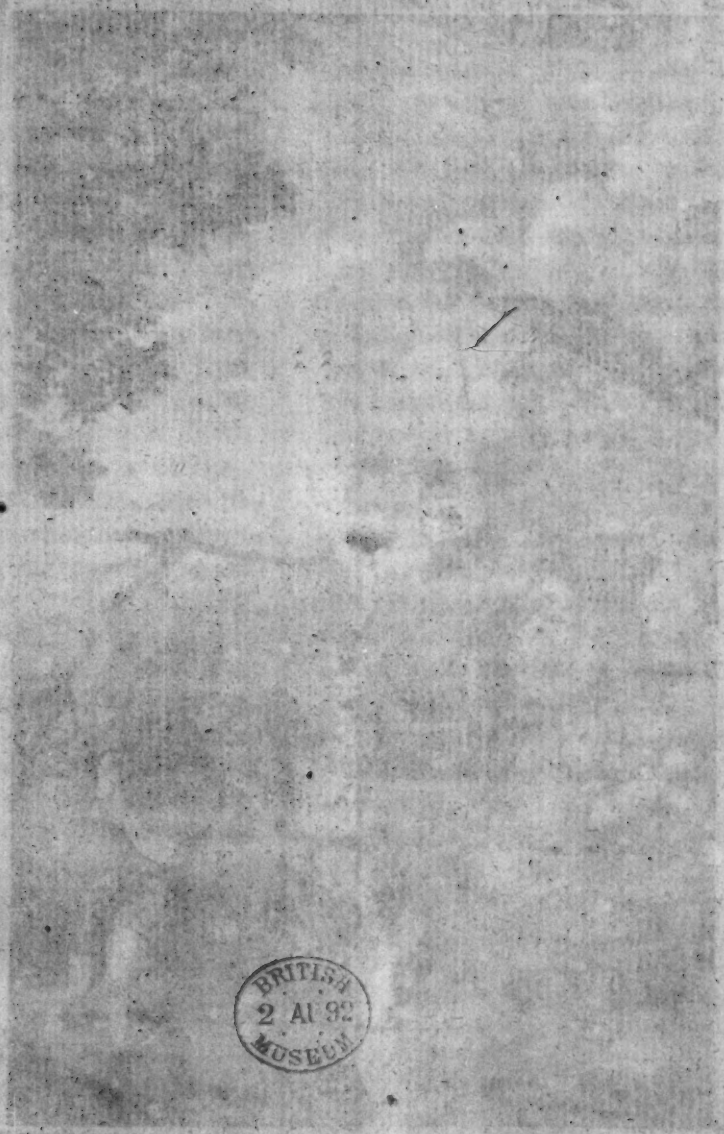
In the Plains of *Midian* there was a Well common to all the Natives of the Place to water their Cattle. Hither *Moſes* directed his Steps, as well to reſt himſelf, as allay his Thirſt; where whilſt he was refreſhing himſelf, the ſeven Daughters of the Prince of *Midian* (that is, *Jethro*, who was both Prieſt and Prince) came to draw Water to fill the Troughs to give their Sheep; but ſome churliſh Shepherds, having a Mind to ſerve their own Turns firſt,

* Some object, That it was very unreaſonable for *Moſes* to kill the *Egpytian* for only ſtriking one of the *Hebrews*. In anſwer to this the *Hebrews* ſay, That the *Hebrew*, whom the *Egyptian* ſtruck, was Husband to one *Salomith*, a very beautiful Woman, whom the *Egyptian* had debauch'd. And that therefore *Moſes* ſlew the *Egyptian*, not for ſtriking the *Hebrew*, but for the Adultery, which he diſcovered from them, whilſt they were quarrelling; ſome ſay, perhaps the *Egyptian* had almoſt killed the *Hebrew*, and that *Moſes* could no other Way than by Force keep him off: Or that the *Egyptian* attacked *Moſes*, and ſo he was forced to kill him in his own Defence.

(*e*) Underſtood. See *Acts* vii. 25. where this is poſitively expreſſed by St. *Stephen*.

Jethro,

MOSES SLAYING *the* EGYPTIAN. *Exodus.* 2. 17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came rudely and put the Royal Shepherdesses by. *Moses* seeing this, steps in to their Relief; and chastising the Shepherds, made them fly.

The frighted Damsels return'd to the Well, and *Moses* very officiously assists them in drawing Water for their Flocks: After which, they took their leave, and hasted home to give their Father an Account of the Generosity of the Stranger, who had protected them against the Insults of the Rusticks. (*f*) *Jethro* hearing their Story, and not seeing the Person that had thus gallantly defended them, reprehends their Ingratitude and Incivility, asking what was become of the generous Stranger? They told him they left him at the Well: Whereupon he bid them go, and invite him home, where *Moses* was so pleased with their kind Entertainment, that he express'd a Willingness to take up his Residence with them, and undertake the Charge of their Sheep. *Jethro* readily clos'd with the Proposal, and to engage him the more to his Interest, bestow'd *Zipporah*, one of his Daughters, upon him for a Wife; by whom he had two Sons, the eldest of which he named *Gershom*, which signifies a Stranger here: For he said, (*g*) I have been a Stranger in a strange Land; and the Younger he called *Eliezer*, importing, God my Help: For the (*h*) God of my Father, said he, was my Help, and delivered me from the Sword of *Pharaoh*.

Whilst *Moses* continued in *Jethro*'s Family, the King of *Egypt* died: But his Successor prov'd no more favourable to the poor oppress'd *Hebrews*; who changed their Oppressor, but not their Condition; the Miseries of which rather increased than abated. In vain they appeal to the merciless Tyrant, and his more cruel Task-masters, who lord it over them with unbounded Severity.

But God, who saw the Affliction of his People, and whose Ears were open to receive their Complaints, look-ed with an Eye of Compassion upon them; and the appointed Time of their Deliverance, which he in his secret Providence had determined, being near, he began to think of preparing *Moses* for it, whom he intended to make use of as an Instrument in the great Work.

Whilst *Moses* kept his Father-in-Law's Sheep, he one Day (*i*) led them as far into the Desart as Mount (*k*)

(*f*) *Jethro* He is called in *Exodus* ii. 18. *Reuel*. He is also called *Reuel*. *Num.* x. 29. who was Father to *Hobab*, called also, and more commonly, *Jethro*. *Exod.* iii. 1.

(*g*) *I have*. *Exod.* ii. 21.

(*h*) *God*, *Exod.* xviii. 4.

(*i*) Led. Here we may observe the Manner of those Times and Countries, that whereas the Shepherds here drive their Flocks before them, the Sheperds there went before their Flocks, and the Flocks followed them; which Custom is alluded to in *Psal.* lxxx. 1. and *John* x. 4.

(*k*) Horeb. Which signifies *Forsaken*, and is here, *Exod.* iii. 1. called the Mountain of God by way of Anticipation, both from the following Appearance of God upon it, at this Time, and his descending upon it afterwards, to give the Law to his People, *Ch.* xix 20. where, tho' it is called *Sinai*, it is the same Place with this, for St. *Stephen* reciting this present Passage in *Acts* vii. 30. calls it Mount *Sinai*.

Holy

Horeb, where the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a Flame of Fire out of the midſt of a Buſh. *Moſes* was ſtartled at the Sight, but that which added to his Admiration and rous'd his Curioſity, was the Continuance of the Buſh unconſum'd, notwithſtanding it was wholly encompaſs'd with Flames.

This extraordinary Accident made *Moſes* conſider it more attentively, and therefore ſaid to himſelf, I will turn aſide, and ſee if I can diſcover the Reaſon why the Buſh is in a Flame of Fire, and yet is not conſumed. But the Lord, to prevent his irreverent Approaches, and ſtrike the greater Awe, and Senſe of the Divine Preſence into him, call'd to him out of the Buſh, and forbad him drawing nearer; and to make him ſtill more ſenſible of the Sacredneſs of the Place, God commanded him not to prophane it, but to put off his Sandals, for the Ground whereon he ſtood was (*l*) Holy.

Moſes being prepar'd for an awful Attention, the Almighty thus diſcovers himſelf to him; *I am the God of thy Father, the God of* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob. Theſe Words ſtruck the frighted *Moſes* with ſuch Reverence of the Divine Majeſty, and Fear of the Effects of his Preſumption, that he fell on the Ground and covered his Face, not daring to look upon the terrible Glory.

But the Lord addreſſed him thus; *I have ſeen the Affliction of my People; I have heard their Complaint, and am* (m) *come down to deliver them out of the Hand of their Oppreſſors, and to conduct them to the promiſed Land, a Land that floweth with* (n) *Milk and Honey; to the Place of the* Canaanites *and* Hittites, *the* Amorites *and the* Perizzites, *the* Hivites *and the* Jebuzites. *And thee have I pitched upon to be the Inſtrument in this great Work; therefore be of good* (o) *Courage; for I will ſend thee to* Pharaoh *to demand Liberty of him for my People, the Children of* Iſrael.

Moſes conſidering the Hatred of the King of *Egypt* towards him, as well as his own Inſufficiency for and Unworthineſs of being the Meſſenger of the moſt high God, excuſed himſelf from the arduous Taſk in theſe Words, *Who am I, that I ſhould go unto* Pharaoh, *and that I ſhould bring forth the Children of* Iſrael *out of* Egypt? When the Lord further encouraged him to proceed on the Taſk; he ſtill evaded the ſame; enquiring in what Manner he ſhould addreſs the *Iſraelites*, and by whom he ſhould tell them he was deputed. The Lord awfully replied (*p*) I AM THAT I AM. And thou ſhalt

(*l*) Holy. Meaning, that wherever God, who is Holineſs itſelf, appears, the Place is Holy, while he is there.

(*m*) Come. This is ſpeaking according to human Paſſion, or after the Manner of Men; God vouchſafes to expreſs himſelf in the Dialect and according to the Capacity of Man, that he may underſtand him.

(*n*) Milk. This is an Hyperbolical Expreſſion of Fruitfulneſs and Plenty of good Things.

(*o*) Courage. This is moſt properly rendered by the *Septuagint*, the Word which we render *Come now*, being an Adverb of Exhorting.

(*p*) I AM. This denotes the Eternity of God, whoſe Eſſence knows no Beginning nor End. And it is common with the *Hebrews* to expreſs the Future in the Preſent Tenſe: And for this Reaſon ſome ſay, I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE; and contend that it ought to be render'd not only from the Letter of the *Hebrew* Text,

ſurther ſay to them, I AM THAT I AM; *that is, the Lord, the God of your Fathers, the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *the God of* Jacob, *has ſent me to you; that is the Name I have had from all Eternity, and by that Name will I be known for ever.*

Go, gather the (q) *Elders of* Iſrael, *and ſay to them, The Lord God of your Fathers hath appeared to me, and ſaid, I have ſeen all the Calamities that have befallen you in* Egypt, *and am reſolved to deliver you, and lead you into the Land of* Canaan.

The Iſraëlites *ſhall believe you, and you ſhall go to the King of* Egypt, *and ſay to him, The God of the* Hebrews *hath commanded us to go three Days Journey into the Deſart, there to offer Sacrifice to the Lord our God.*

This Requeſt, tho' ſo very reaſonable, I know he will not grant, but refuſe to let you go unleſs compelled by a powerful Hand. But I will exert myſelf in many miraculous Operations upon him and his Subjects; and at laſt he ſhall permit you to depart; but you ſhall not go away empty, for ye ſhall be loaded with the Spoils of the Egyptians.

This ſolemn Aſſurance delivered by the Mouth of God, one would be apt to think, might have been ſufficient to have encouraged *Moſes* willingly to undertake the Embaſſy; but either from the Difficulty or Boldneſs of the Enterprize, or from Diffidence of his own Abilities, he declined it, and queſtion'd whether the *Iſraelites* would receive his Credentials.

This Objection God immediately removed by a Miracle; for commanding him to throw his Sheep-hook on the Ground, it was inſtantly turned into a Serpent. *Moſes* affrighted at this ſudden Change of his Sheep-hook, fled from it. But God to encourage him, bid him take it up by the Tail; which he had no ſooner done, but it reſumed its former Shape; and at the ſame Time, to convince him that he ſhould not want Credit with the *Iſraelites*, God gave Commiſſion to perform the ſame Miracle before them

And to remove all further Scruple, he condeſcended to give him another Sign, bidding him put his Hand into his Boſom; which he had no ſooner done, but it was ſtruck with a (r) white Leproſy. And when by God's Command he had put it into his Boſom a-

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Text, but from the genuine Senſe of the Words: From which others likewiſe infer that it ought to be ſo render'd, I WILL BE *for ever*; and I WILL BE *with you, and redeem you from the* Egyptians: And others, I WILL be *with you in your preſent Tribulations and future Calamities.* This Name is likewiſe expreſſed in *Revelations*, by which it ſignified JEHOVAH, which is the proper Name of God.

(q) Elders. By this ſome mean the Doctors and Governors; but it is moſt probable the Elders were Heads or Chiefs of Tribes and Families. By which it is plain there was a private Policy and Oeconomy continued among the *Iſraelites*, tho' in this ſervile Condition.

(r) White Leproſy. The Evidence of this Miracle was ſo much the more convincing, becauſe the *White Leproſy*, which was held incurable, was both inflicted and healed in an Inſtant, without any outward Means, or Phyſical Application.

gain, and plucked it out, his Fleſh reſumed its former Colour and Subſtance.

Moreover, to arm him ſufficiently, beyond all Queſtion, he was pleaſed to add a third Miracle; *If they will not believe theſe two former, thou ſhalt take of the Water of the River, and pour it upon dry Land, and the Water ſhall become Blood.*

Notwithſtanding theſe ſolemn and repeated Aſſurances of the divine Aid, Favour and Protection, *Moſes* ſtill waved the important Office, urging as a farther Plea, that he wanted Eloquence, the great Qualification of an Ambaſſador; and ſince God had condeſcended to talk to him, he was more ſlow of Speech than before.

This Objection the Lord was pleaſed to remove, by putting him in Mind of his Omnipotence. *Who made the Mouth of Man?* ſaid he. *And who made the Dum and Deaf, and the Blind, and him that ſees? Was it not I? Now therefore go, and I will furniſh thee with Words, and make thee eloquent.*

Hitherto *Moſes* had ſome Glimpſe of Pretence for his Unwillingneſs to go; but now all his Objections are anſwered, and his Scruples removed, he very bluntly begs to be excuſed from this Enterprize, ſaying, *O my Lord, inſtead of me, ſend, I pray thee, by* (s) *him whom thou wilt ſend.*

So long as *Moſes* had any Thing to plead in (t) Excuſe for his not going, God heard him patiently, and graciouſly condeſcended to remove his Doubts; but when his Modeſty in declining the Office and Honour God propoſed to him was turned into an obſtinate Refuſal, the Lord was angry with him; but in his Anger remembring Mercy, he reſumes *Moſes*'s laſt Objection (which he had already anſwered in general) and ſhews him more particularly how to ſupply that Defect; *Is not* Aaron *the Levite thy Brother?* ſaid he. *He is eloquent, and I will appoint him to meet thee. Tell him what I have ſaid; and be aſſured that I will aſſiſt you both, and direct you what to ſay: He ſhall be the Orator, and thou ſhalt be to him* (u) *inſtead of* (w) *God. And to ſtrengthen thy Com-*

(s) Him, Exod. iv. 13. The Texts ſays, *Send by the Hand of him thou wilt ſend*; where the Word *Hand* is put for the Office or Miniſtry. But by *Moſes*'s deſiring God to ſend another inſtead of him, he means a Man fitter to execute that Commiſſion than himſelf was.

(t) Excuſe. It is the Opinion of ſeveral Commentators on this Place, and it is very probable, *Moſes* had another Reaſon beſides his Inſufficiency, which made him unwilling to go of this Errand into *Egypt*, and which he was not willing to diſcover. Juſt before God appeared to *Moſes* in the Buſh, and had this diſcourſe with him, as we read in *Exodus*. That the King of *Egypt* died; that King in whoſe Reign *Moſes* had ſlain the *Egyptian*, and who ſought to apprehend him, to put him to Death for it.

(u) Inſtead. That is, He ſhall conſult thee inſtead of me, that from thee he may know my Will, and thou ſhalt impart to him what thou receiveſt of me. Conſonant to this is that of our Saviour *Chriſt* to his Apoſtles, *He that heareth you heareth me, &c.*

(w) God. By theſe words, *Thou ſhalt be to him* inſtead of, *or as God.* Commentators ſhew the Power God now inveſted *Moſes* with, in delivering

miſſion, and give thee Credit among my People, take this Rod in thy Hand, for I will enable thee to do many Miracles with it.

Moſes having nothing more to urge againſt this Enterprize, at laſt yields, and took the (*x*) Rod of God in his Hand. Then taking his Wife and Sons he left Mount *Horeb*, and went to *Jethro* his Father-inlaw, with whom, it ſeems he left them till he had conducted the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, when *Jethro* brought them to him again in the Wilderneſs.

Moſes being thus convinceed that God had deſigned him the Agent in tranſacting this grand Affair, whilſt he was preparing himſelf for his Journey, to make him more chearfully proceed in it, and to diſpel his Fears of being called to Account for his former Actions in *Egypt*, God bids him return thither, aſſuring him, that thoſe who had a Deſign againſt his Life were dead.

Then repeating his former Order, he ſays, *When thou comeſt into* Egypt, *be ſure to perform all the Miracles I have enabled thee to do; and to illuſtrate my Power, I will ſo harden* Pharaoh's *Heart, that he ſhall refuſe to let the Children of* Iſrael *go, till I have ſlain his Son, even his Firſt-born.*

By the Way God takes Occaſion to put *Moſes* in Mind of the Danger of Diſobedience, to preſerve him from lapſing into it hereafter.

It ſeems *Moſes*, either thro' Neglect, or Indulgence to his Wife, who was not an *Iſraelite*, had not yet circumciſed his Son *Eliezer*, by which he provoked the Lord ſo highly, that in the Way he threatened to (*z*) kill him for his Neglect.

His Wife *Zipporah*, underſtanding the Cauſe of the Divine Diſpleaſure, took a ſharp Flint, and immediately circumciſed the Child; and throwing the Foreſkin at her Huſband's Feet, ſhe ſaid, *Thou art a Huſband of* (a) *Blood to me.*

This being over, the Lord pardoned *Moſes*, and diſmiſſed him to purſue his Journey, which he did; and ſoon arrived at his Father-in-law *Jethro*'s Houſe, whom, as he acquainted not with the particular Reaſon of his leaving *Egypt*, ſo neither does he now ſay any thing to him of the Viſion he had

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delivering him this Commiſſion, making him not only Chief over *Aaron*, but the reſt of the *Iſraelites*. For this Name of *God* is no where given to Men, but to ſignify the Power of Life and Death over them.

(*x*) Rod of God. So it is now called, ſince God had ſo ſignally honoured it, and, as it were, conſecrated it to an Holy Uſe, *Exod.* iv. 26.

(*z*) Kill him. It ſeems moſt probable from the Context that *Moſes*'s Puniſhment muſt be Sickneſs, or ſome corporal Viſitation upon him; otherwiſe, if he had been in Health, he, and not *Zipporah* his Wife, would have circumciſed the Child.

(*a*) Blood. Undoubtedly, the Word *Blood* here refers to the *Circumciſion*, which was the Cauſe of its Effuſion. Nor do they ſeem to conjecture amiſs, who thus interpret this Text: *With the Blood of my Child I preſerve and ſave thee: for, the Neglect of the Child's being circumciſed being thy Fault, I have ſaved thy Life by the Blood of the Circumciſion, which otherwiſe God might have taken away.*

Com-

ſeen, nor the Meſſage he had received from God to deliver to the King of *Egypt*; but as he had entered himſelf by Contract into *Jethro*'s Service, and become ſo nearly related as to be his Son-in-law, he thought it but reaſonable to aſk his Conſent to return to *Egypt* to viſit his Brethren, and ſee whether they were living. *Jethro* readily gave Conſent in the uſual Form, *Go in Peace.*

Moſes being now in the Way to *Egypt*, the (*b*) Lord commanded *Aaron* his Brother to go into the Wilderneſs to meet *Moſes*. *Aaron* obeyed the holy Call, and went as far as Mount *Horeb*, where he met his Brother, and embraced him; to whom *Moſes* told all that God had commanded him, and the Wonders he was to perform.

The two Brothers thus joined in Commiſſion, tho' *Moſes* was Sovereign, repair to *Egypt*; and ſummoning the Elders of the People together, *Aaron* delivers the Meſſage which the Lord had ſent by *Moſes*, and *Moſes* ſtraightway confirmed it, by doing the Miracles which God had commanded, in the Sight of the People, who thereupon believed, and received them joyfully.

And now, all being convinced that the Lord had taken Compaſſion on the wretched Condition of the Children of *Iſrael*, that he had viſited them in their Affliction, and had taken a Courſe for their Deliverance, they fell down and worſhipped him.

(*b*) Commanded. Hence it's plain, that *Aaron*, as a Prophet received a Revelation from God; which is likewiſe confirmed, 1 *Sam.* ii. 27. *Did not I plainly appear to the Houſe of thy Father, when they were in* Egypt? For *Eli* was deſcended from *Aaron*.

CHAP. II.

Moſes *and* Aaron *arrive at the Court of* Pharaoh, *deliver their Meſſage to the King, and are reprimanded by him.* Pharaoh *increaſes the Burthen of the* Iſraelites. *God renews his Promiſe to his choſen People.* Pharaoh's *Heart is hardened, inſomuch that he would not releaſe the* Iſraelites *from Bondage, notwithſtanding the Miracles wrought by* Moſes *and* Aaron.

THE Servants of God thus commiſſioned, arrive at the Court of *Pharaoh*; and in poſitive Terms, demanded the Releaſe of the *Iſraelites*. The haughty Tyrant not only denied Compliance with their Demand, but moſt impiouſly arraigned the divine Prerogative, and called in queſtion the Exiſtence of the only wiſe and true God in theſe preſumptuous Words, *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey his Voice to let* Iſrael *go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let* Iſrael *go.*

Moſes and *Aaron*, to inform him whom they meant by the Lord, replied, *The God of the* Hebrews, *whom we adore, hath commanded us to offer Sacrifice to him; therefore we beg Leave to go three Days Journey into the Deſart, that we may pay due Adoration to our God, leſt he puniſh us for our Diſobedience, and you much more for hindering us.*

Revenge

The King incenſed at this unuſual Liberty they took, and looking upon them as Incendiaries, ſharply reprimanded them, ſaying, "*Why do ye hinder the People from Work? Becauſe they are numerous, you would incite them to rebel: Be gone all to your Labour, or I'll make you ſenſible of Royal Diſpleaſure.*

The King having thus rudely diſmiſſed *Moſes* and *Aaron*, gave Charge to the Task-maſters that they ſhould no more give the People Straw to make Brick, as they had done before; but make them go gather Straw for themſelves where they could find it; but yet to lay upon them the ſame Tale of Bricks without Abatement: For, ſaid he, they are idle, and this is but a Pretence to excuſe them from their Work. The Task-maſters acquainted their under Officers with this ſevere Injunction, who immediately told it to the People, and they accordingly were forced to wander about the Country to ſeek for Stubble inſtead of Straw; the Task-maſters at the ſame Time exacting from them their uſual Number of Bricks; which when they were not able to perform, the Under-Officers, who were *Iſraelites*, and whom the Task-maſters had ſet over them, were called to Account, and beaten.

They, not well knowing from whence this Severity proceeded, whether from the Edict of the King, or the Rigour of the Taſk-maſters, complained to the King himſelf; and laying their Grievance before him, in a moſt humble Manner expoſtulated the Matter with him thus: '*Why ſhould the King deal ſo ſeverely with his Servants? The Taſkmaſters allow us no Straw, and yet demand Brick of us, which is impoſſible to be done: and tho' they are in Fault, yet are we puniſhed.*

This juſt and moſt reaſonable Deſire, inſtead of Redreſs, met with an Addition to the Cauſe of their Complaint; the King told them, they ſhould have no Straw, and yet deliver the full Tale of Bricks.

This Anſwer gave them much Uneaſineſs, and drove them almoſt to Deſpair: ſo that meeting with *Moſes* and *Aaron* in the Way, as they came from *Pharaoh*, and looking upon them as the Cauſe of having theſe heavier Burdens laid upon them, they unadviſedly giving way to their preſent Paſſion, diſcharged their Grief and Anger upon them, ſaying, *The Lord* (*c*) *revenge us on you; for ye have made us hateful and abominable in the Sight of the King and his Subjects, and have given them* (*d*) *Occaſion to oppreſs us the more.*

This Reflection grieved the Soul of *Moſes*, who expected a more grateful Return for his Care and Concern for them; wherefore retiring from them, he addreſſed himſelf to God in this humble Expoſtulation; *Why, O Lord,*

(*c*) Revenge. Thus the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe, and not diſagreeable to the *Hebrews*, who often by Metonymy take *Judgment* for the Bond or End of *Judgment*. Thus to *judge* is often uſed for to *revenge*.

(*d*) Occaſion. The Text is in *Exod.* v. 21. *Ye have put a Sword into their Hand to ſlay us.* Which cannot be literally taken here; for the *Egyptians* had both the Civil and Military Sword always in their Power, to uſe as they pleaſed. But this is a Scripture Phraſe, and is often uſed to expreſs any pungent Calamity or Affliction.

haſt thou thus afflicted this People? For ſince I ſpoke to Pharaoh *in thy Name, he hath treated them with more Severity than before; and they are more unlikely to be delivered than ever.*

Moſes's Concern for the Oppreſſion of the *Iſraelites*, made him forget the Promiſe God had given him, and the Perverſeneſs of *Pharaoh*, which he had foretold: However, God, to encourage him, gives him this gracious Anſwer; *I am the Lord, the Almighty God, that appeared to* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob. *Was I not known to them by my Name* Jehovah? *Be aſſured that I the Lord, who made a Covenant with their Fathers to give to their Poſterity the Land of* Canaan, *have heard their Complaints, and remembred my Promiſe.*

Therefore ſay thus to the Children of Iſrael, *I am* Jehovah, *who exiſt only of myſelf, and give Exiſtence to all Beings.*

Tell them, I will deliver them from the Egyptian *Slavery, with the Power of my Almighty Arm, and inflict heavy Judgments on thoſe that oppreſs them.*

Nor will I only deliver you all from this Bondage, but I will take you under my immediate Protection: ye ſhall be my People, and I will be your God. And ye ſhall know that I am Jehovah, *your God, who will releaſe you from the Oppreſſions of* Egypt: *And I will bring you into the Land, concerning which I* (f) *lifted up my Hand in Confirmation that I would give it to* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob *in their Poſterity: And I will give it you for an Inheritance.*

I am Jehovah, *the Lord, that promiſeth this, and that can, and will do it.*

Encouraged by this gracious Declaration of the Almighty, *Moſes* accordingly repaired to the Children of *Iſrael*, and delivered his Meſſage, as God had commanded. But they conſidering the ſad Increaſe of their Servitude ever ſince he undertook to be their Deliverer, were ſo prejudiced againſt him, that they would not believe him.

Upon this he left them, till either the Extremity of their Sufferings, or the Hand of God eminently appearing in plaguing their Oppreſſor, ſhould awaken them to a greater Deſire of Deliverance.

But God, purſuing the Ends of his Providence, commanded *Moſes* to go to the King of *Egypt*, and demand the Liberty of his People.

Moſes having been ſo roughly diſmiſſed from *Pharaoh*'s Preſence, and ſo unkindly rejected by the *Iſraelites*, declined the Errand, by drawing an Argument from each; *Since the Children of* Iſrael, ſays he, *thine own People, would not hear me, tho' what I offered was ſo much to their Advantage, how can I expect that ſo wicked a Prince as* Pharaoh *is, ſhould give Credit to ſuch a* (g) *Stammerer as I am, in a Matter ſo much to his Loſs?*

But the Lord, as before, was ſtill patient in hearing, and removed *Moſes*'s

(f) Lifted. This is a Phraſe often uſed in Scripture to expreſs Swearing, which was uſually done by lifting up of Hands: Thus we find it in *Gen.* xiv. 22. *Numb.* xiv. 30. *Deut.* xxxii. 40. and in many other Places.

(g) Stammerer. The Word in the Text, *Exod.* vi. 12, is rendered, *Who am of uncircumciſed Lips*, that is, ſlow of Speech for *Moſes* laboured under a Defect in his Tongue, as he urged when God firſt pitched upon him to undertake

Objections; and therefore ſaid to him, *Conſider, I have made thee as a* (h) *God to* Pharaoh, *and* Aaron *thy Brother ſhall be thy Interpreter, or Orator. Thou ſhalt tell him all that I have commanded thee, and ye ſhall demand of* Pharaoh *the Deliverance of my People. And that thou mayſt not be diſcouraged by a Repulſe, as before, take Notice that* Pharaoh *ſhall give no Credit to what thou ſayſt, that I may thereby ſhew my Power and Wonders on him and his People, and deliver the Children of* Iſrael *by the Strength of my Hand. For ſince* Pharaoh *hath begun to harden his Heart in contemptuouſly treating me, and abuſing my People, I will now permit him to go on in his obſtinate Humour, that I may exert my Power in miraculous Operations in the Land of* Egypt. *Therefore when ye come into* Pharaoh's *Preſence, and he ſhall demand a Miracle of you, to convince him of the Truth of your Meſſage, thou ſhalt direct* Aaron *to caſt his Rod on the Ground before* Pharaoh, *and it ſhall be turned into a Serpent.*

Purſuant to the Divine Command, they appeared before *Pharaoh*, and delivered their Meſſage; which he rejecting, *Aaron* caſt down his Rod before the King, in the Sight of his Servants, and it became a Serpent.

To confront this Miracle, the King preſently ſent for his (*i*) Magicians, who by their Inchantments performed the ſame that *Aaron* did by God's immediate Power. For throwing down their Rods, they became in Appearance Serpents; but with this Difference, that *Aaron*'s devoured theirs, and reſumed its wonted Form.

This Miracle made no Impreſſion on the obſtinate Tyrant; therefore God reſolved to make Uſe of more ſenſible Scourges, and afflict the *Egyptians* with ſuch a Succeſſion of Plagues, as ſhould compel them to diſmiſs the inſlaved *Iſraelites*; and having obſerved to *Moſes*, that *Pharaoh*'s Heart was hardened, he bid him take the Rod, which had been turned into a Serpent, and preſent himſelf in *Pharaoh*'s View, at his uſual Time of coming to the Banks of the River *Nile*; giving him this freſh Inſtruction: *Tell him, The Almighty God of the* Hebrews *hath ſent thee to him; and tho' he hath been ſo obſtinate hitherto as to detain the* Iſraelites, *their God will afflict him for his Perverſeneſs: that he will make him ſenſible by his Judgments, which he will inflict upon him and his People.*

And to encourage *Moſes* in the Execution of his Commiſſion, he promiſed

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take the Deliverance of his People. But the Word *Uncircumciſed* is phraſeologically uſed upon ſeveral Occaſions by the *Hebrews*, as when they called any one *uncircumciſed in Heart, Mind, or Tongue*, they mean one that labours under a Defect in any of theſe, Beſides, as Circumciſion was the firſt and greateſt Sacrament among them, ſo Uncircumciſion was eſteemed by them the greateſt Scandal and Diſgrace.

(*h*) God. That is, by exerciſing the Judgments of God upon him, thou ſhalt be as terrible to him as God.

(*i*) Magicians. Two of which, who probably were the moſt eminent of the Company, are by the Apoſtle named *James* and *Jambres*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 8. not from any Place of the Old Teſtament, but from other Records of the *Jews* as divers other Things, mentioned in the New Teſtament.

River

his Aſſiſtance in the Performance of the firſt Miracle, which was turning the Water of the River into Blood.

Moſes, ever attentive to the Divine Command, at the Time appointed, waited the King's Coming to the (*k*) River, and accoſted him with the Meſſage. The Infidel Prince, deaf to the Call of God, by two Heavenly Miſſionaries, perſiſted in his Reſolution (ſo little did the firſt Miracle operate on him) and though *Moſes* and *Aaron* admoniſhed him of the Omnipotence of their God, he would not believe them.

Aaron therefore receiving the Rod from *Moſes*, liſted it up, as God had commanded; and ſtriking the Water, it turned into * Blood; which immediately ſtagnating, grew ſo offenſive, that the Fiſh were ſuffocated, and the Inhabitants forced to dig for Water in new Places to allay their Thirſt.

Notwithſtanding this Plague continued upon them for ſeven Days, yet *Pharaoh* was ſtill obſtinate; and his Hatred to the *Iſraelites* inflamed the more, becauſe *Moſes* being known to have had his Education among the *Egyptians*, the King concluded, that all this was performed by magic Skill. Wherefore calling for his Magicians, he put them upon the ſame Trial; who taking ſome of the Water which the *Egyptians* had digged, by their Enchantments, they made him believe that they turned it to Blood.

Although this was but a Deluſion, yet it convinced *Pharach*, that what *Moſes* and *Aaron* had done, was not the Effect of any ſupernatural Virtue, but a meer Trick of Art, and thereupon returned reſolute to ſtop the *Iſraelites*.

But it pleaſed God to diſplay repeated Miracles before this cruel and obſtinate Monarch; for as ſoon as the ſeven Days were expired, *Moſes*, at the Command of God, accoſted him again, and renewed his Inſtances for the Delivery of the *Iſraelites*, threatening upon his Refuſal to bring upon the Land ſuch prodigious Number of Frogs as ſhould viſit him and his Subjects in their moſt private Receſſes.

Pharaoh regardleſs of his Threats defied him; upon which *Moſes* gave *Aaron* an Order to take the Rod, and ſtretch forth his Hand with it over the River, which in an Inſtant ſo affected all the Waters of *Egypt*, that not waiting for the ſlow Productions of Nature, the animated Streams unburthened themſelves upon the Land in Sholes of Frogs, which immediately invaded all Parts, infeſting even the Royal Palace with their diſagreeable Croaking.

Now again *Pharaoh* had recourſe to

(*k*) River. This is the River *Nilus* which is incomparably the moſt famous River in the World, whether we conſider the Greatneſs of it (for it runs about nine hundred *German* Miles) or the Things is produces, or the miraculous Ebbing or Flowing of it. It is abſolutely called in the Scripture *Nachal Miſraim* the River of *Egypt*: From whence the Word *Nile* is not unnaturally derived.

* Blood. *Theodoret* upon *Exodus* ſays thus of this Change of the Waters of *Nile*: Being changed into Blood they accuſed the *Egyptians* of the Murder of the Infants. And the Book of *Wiſdom*, xi. 6. makes the ſame Obſervation: *Inſtead of a Fountain of running Water, the Enemies were troubled with corrupt Blood, which was to rebuke the Commandment of the killing of the Children.*

his Magicians, who by their mimic Power ſo deluded him, that they made him believe they wrought the ſame Miracle, which hardened him for a while; but the loathſome Plague purſuing him and his People wherever they went, he was forced to apply to *Moſes* and *Aaron* for Relief, offering to capitulate with their God upon Terms of Permiſſion for them to go and Sacrifice to him.

Moſes demanded the Time when this ſhould be put to an Iſſue, and they both agreed upon the next Day. Accordingly *Moſes* addreſſed himſelf to God, and the Frogs ſoon died, which the People gathered in Heaps, ſo that the Land ſtank of them before they could be diſpoſed of.

The impious *Pharaoh* vainly imagined that the Artillery of Vengeance was then exhauſted, unfaithfully broke his Word, and refuſed to let the *Iſraelites* to go ſerve their God.

This Violation ſo provoked the Almighty, that he reſolved to treat the haughty Tyrant in a more ſurpriſing Manner than he had hitherto done; for before, he firſt denounced his Judgments, by giving him warning, that he might eſcape them. But now he would give him no further Notice, and therefore commanded *Moſes* to direct *Aaron* to ſtretch out his Rod, and ſtrike the Duſt with it, that it might become (*m*) Lice.

Aaron had no ſooner obeyed, than ſtraitway the animated Duſt turned into Swarms of Vermin, which the Magicians, who had faintly imitated the former Plagues, now attempted in vain. They owned their Art outdone, and acknowledged this to be the inimitable Work of a Divine Hand.

And yet again, notwithſtanding the Obſtinacy of *Pharaoh*, who would not in the leaſt hearken to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, God condeſcended to give him another Summons.

Riſe up, ſays God to *Moſes*, *early in the Morning, and meet* Pharaoh *as he comes to the River. Tell him, Thus ſaith the Lord; Let my People go, that they may ſerve me, or I wil ſend Swarms of* (n) *Flies upon thee and thy People, which ſhall fill their Houſes, and cover the Face of the Earth. And that thou may'ſt know, that this is brought as a Judgment upon thee and thy Subjects, for oppreſſing my People; I will on that Day ſeparate the Land of* Goſhen; *in which my Servants dwell, from the reſt of* Egypt, *that the Flies ſhall not moleſt them.*

Accordingly, upon *Pharaoh*'s ob-

(*m*) Lice. What Kind of Creature this was, is not certainly known. It ſeems to me moſt probable, that it was ſome new Kind of Creature, call'd analogically by an old known Name, which it *Pererius*'s Conjecture, and is approved by *Rivet*.

(*n*). Flies. So our *Engliſh* Tranſlation. St. *Jerom*, ſays, *All ſorts of Flies.* The Septuagint *Kun muchyan*, a particular Kind of Fly called a *Dog Fly*, from its Biting. Some tranſlate this a *Mixture of Beaſts*; The *French*, *une meſlee de Beſte: Junius* and *Tremellius*, *Colluviem*; and *Joſephus* ſeems to underſtand it of ſeveral Sorts of inſects that infeſted the Country, which were never ſeen in *Egypt* before nor ſince.

ſtinately perſiſting to detain the *Iſraelites* in Slavery, the next Day Clouds if ſwarming inſects filled the Air, which on numberleſs Troops deſcended to the Earth, and with their ſullen and unuſual Noiſe, ſurprized and affrighted the wretched Inhabitants.

All Attempts proved vain and fruitleſs to remove this increaſing Evil; their moſt private Receſſes could not ſecure them from the poiſonous Bitings of theſe revengeful Animals, and a Succeſſion of painted Miſery invaded them on all Sides.

Pharaoh's Guards could not ſave him from the painful Attacks of this flying Hoſt, which boldly ſwarmed about, and ſeized the very Weapons they ſhould draw in their Maſter's Defence.

The Sword and Spear were uſeleſs to repel this airy Foe, whoſe penetrating Sting was ſharper than their Point.

The Magicians with Confuſion looked upon this direful Plague, and no more pretended to offer at any Imitation. A general Horror filled the Towns and Fields, and all the Country echoed with the Cries of tortured Men and Cattle.

Pharaoh not able to endure this Plague, called preſently for *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and in a ſullen diſcontented Tone bid them go and ſacrifice to their God, but not beyond the Bounds of *Egypt*.

He was deſirous of Relief, but unwilling to part with a People, by whoſe Slavery he had reaped ſo great Advantage; and being a Stranger and Enemy to the true God, did not conceive that the *Iſraelites* could not acceptably ſacrifice to their God, whilſt under the *Egyptian* Bondage.

Moſes, deſirous of convincing, rather than enflaming the infidal Prince, diſcreetly anſwered, We cannot ſacrifice to our God in this Land, for that would be an (*o*) Affront to the *Egyptians*, and they will be revenged on us: permit us therefore to avoid their Reſentment, by going three Days Journey into the Wilderneſs, and ſacrifice to our God, as he hath commanded us.

If nothing elſe will ſerve you, (ſaid *Pharaoh*,) but to go into the Deſart, I will let you go, but not far. And in Return for this Conceſſion, intreat your God to remove this Plague.

Moſes promiſed to intercede for him but cautioned *Pharaoh* to be ſincere in his Grant. And being gone from his Preſence, addreſſed himſelf to God to remove the Plague of Flies. His Prayers were heard, and the Inſects took their Flight. But the Plagues were no ſooner removed, than the Tyrant reaſſumed his former Obſtinacy, nor would even yet ſuffer the *Iſraelites* to worſhip the Lord their God, in the Way and Manner he had directed them.

Upon this high Provocation, God ſent *Moſes* again to *Pharaoh* with this Meſſage: *Thus ſaith the God of the* Hebrews, *Let my People go, that they may ſerve me, or be aſſured I will viſit*

(*o*) Affront. That is, if we ſhould ſacrifice thoſe Creatures which the *Egyptians* worſhip for Gods, as the Ox and the Sheep, they will be affronted to ſee us ſacrifice their Gods to our God.

all thy Cattle that are in the Field with a grievous Murrain; and to make thee ſtill more ſenſible of my Omnipotence, I will by a wonderful Diſtinction, preſerve the Cattle of my People, whilſt I deſtroy thoſe of the Egyptians.

The awful Threatning was moſt ſeverely executed the very next Day, thro' the Obſtinacy of the King. The generous Horſe loathed his full Manger and loved Paſtures, and ſunk under his Rider; the Aſs and Camel could no longer ſupport their Burdens, or their own Weight; the labouring Ox dropped down dead before the Plough; the harmleſs Sheep died bleating, and the faithful Dogs lay gaſping by them.

Notwithſtanding this horrid Spectacle, *Pharaoh* continued his former Temper, reſolved ſtill to brave Heaven with his impious Perverſneſs: and remembring what *Moſes* had ſaid of the Preſervation of the *Iſraelites* Cattle, he ſent to *Goſhen* to learn how it had fared with them, and was aſſured there was not one of the Cattle of the *Iſraelites* dead; by which he might have ſeen, that this was no Caſualty, but a direct Judgment upon him, exactly anſwering the divine Prediction. Notwithſtanding this, he continued in his former Reſolution, not to let the *Iſraelites* go.

As all theſe Means proved ineffectual to ſoften the obdurate Heart of this impious Monarch, the Almighty therefore determined to ſurprize him with a Plague, without giving him any Warning, and immediately commanded *Moſes* and *Aaron* to take Handsful of Aſhes from the Furnace, and before *Pharaoh*'s Face to throw them in the Air.

The Aſhes ſoon ſpread the dire Contagion, and the tainted Air infected the *Egyptians* Blood with its poiſonous Influence; which appeared upon their Skin in ſwelling (*p*) Scabs and Ulcers, and their whole Conſtitution became a noiſome Spring of Sores. This Plague was ſo torturing that the Magicians, who poſſibly once more would have tried their Skill to ſee if they could regain their Credit, were not able to ſtand before *Moſes*, for it affected them as well as the reſt of the *Egyptians*.

Pharaoh's Obſtinacy, which before proceeded from an implacable Hatred to the choſen People of God, now aroſe from a judicial Hardneſs of Heart, as the immediate Effect of a divine and ſupernatural Cauſe. The Almighty rendered the very Powers of Heaven ſubſervient to his divine Purpoſe, giving this Charge to his Servant *Moſes*, *Go early in the Morning to the King of* Egypt, *and tell him, That I the God of the* Hebrews *demand the Liberty of my People, that they may worſhip me:*

(*p*) Scab. This, in *Deuteronomy*, is one of the Curſes with which Diſobedience to God is threaten'd *Th. Lord ſhall ſmite thee with the Botch of* Egypt, *&c.* From hence I believe came the Calumny, which *Trog*, *Pompeius*, *Diod. Siculus*, *Tacitus*, and other Heathens caſt upon the *Hebrews*, *viz.* that they were expelled *Egypt*, for being ſcabbed and leprous: which miſtake was eaſy; inſtead of being diſmiſſed for having brought thoſe Diſeaſes upon the *Egyptians*.

Plagues,

which if he refuſe, he may be aſſured, I will ſhower my (q) *Plagues upon him, and his People; and I will make him know, that I am the only God on Earth.*

Say further to him; (r) *If when lately I ſmote the Cattle with the Murrain, I had ſmitten thee and thy People with Peſtilence, thou hadſt been cut off from the Earth. But I have reſerved thee to ſhew my Power upon, and by the Judgments I ſhall inflict upon him, I will publiſh my Name to all the World.*

Oppreſs not, nor detain my People; for if thou doſt, to (s) *Morrow by this Time, unleſs thou ſubmitteſt thyſelf, I will ſend ſuch a Storm of Hail from Heaven upon* Egypt, *as never was known ſince it was* (t) *a Nation.*

And that thou mayſt not looſe what Cattle the Murrain left, which being not in the Field, eſcaped that Plague, ſend thy Servants, and let them drive them under Shelter; for upon every Man and Beaſt, which ſhall be found in the Field, the Storm ſhall fall, and they ſhall ſurely die.

So heedleſs as well as impious was *Pharaoh*, that even this Declaration could not induce to preſerve himſelf, or his People: but ſome of them, who had been (u) Witneſſes of the dreadful Wrath of God, made a prudent Uſe of the divine Caution, and houſed their Cattle in Time, by which Means they were preſerved.

The Time appointed being come, *Moſes* attended the hardened King, and to convince him of the Truth of what he had threatened him with, waved his Wand in the Air, which ſoon began to murmur in imperfect Sounds, till full-charged Clouds with impetuous Force burſt and diſcharged themſelves in ſuch terrible Peels of Thunder, as ſhook the whole Frame of Nature. This was ſucceeded by a ſtony Shower of monſtrous Hail, ſuch as Winter never yet produced, which covered the Ground with the ſcattered Ruins of Trees and Houſes, and the dead Bodies of Men and Beaſts.

Nor did the divine Vengeance ſtop here; the Heavens became a Body of liquid Fire, which darting on the Ground, glided over the Waters, and filled every Place with dreadful Horror.

This ſhocked the haughty Tyrant; who ſeeing Nature, as he imagined, ready to diſſolve, melted into Penitence, and confeſſed himſelf guilty.

But this being an Act of Neceſſity,

(q) Plagues. By Plagues, in this Place, (*viz. Exod.* ix. 14) is not meant, that God would ſend all the Plagues which he afterwards inflicted ſucceſſively, but thoſe which attended this Plague from Heaven, as Hail, Thunder, Lightning, and Rain.

(r) If, &c. Here God ſhews that he wanted not Power to deſtroy *Pharaoh* and his Subjects for oppreſſing his People *Iſrael*; but that he reſerved him for greater Puniſhment.

(s) Morrow. It is very common in Scripture to find the particular Time expreſſed; which is uſed only to ſhew the Certainty of Providence.

(t) A Nation. *Egypt* was firſt inhabited by *Meſraim* (whence it is called in *Hebrew*, *Meſraim*, and to this Day by the *Turks*, *Meſra* the Son of *Cham*.

(u) Witneſſes. *Exod.* ix 20. It is ſaid of thoſe that ſecured their Cattle by houſing them before the Storm, that *they feared the Lord*; which implies not a revential Fear, but a ſervile Fear, into which they had been terrified by the Judgments God had inflicted on them.

not of Virtue, it died with his Fear, which *Moſes* foreſaw; for when *Pharaoh* begged him to interceed to God for him, and to remove this Plague, *Moſes* told him, he would anſwer his Requeſt, but aſſured him, he knew he did not mean ſincerely; and that his Repentance was only the Effect of his Fright.

Of this the Lord, as he had done before, gave *Moſes* Notice; *I have hardened his Heart, and the Hearts of his Servants, that I may ſhew theſe my Wonders before them, and that thou mayſt tell in the Hearing of thy Sons, and the* Iſraelites *to ſucceeding Generations, what Prodigies I have wrought in* Egypt, *that ye may all know that I am the Lord, the Almighty* Jehovah.

Wherefore go to Pharaoh, *and tell him, Thus ſaith the Lord God of the* Hebrews, *Why doſt thou perſiſt in thy Obſtinacy? Let my People go, that they may ſerve me, or I will bring the Locuſt into thy Land to Morrow, which ſhall come in ſuch Swarms, as ſhall cover the Surface of the Earth, and devour all the Products of it that have eſcaped the former Plagues. And this ſhall prove ſuch a Plague as none of thy Predeceſſors ever ſaw.*

Having thus delivered the Will of the Almighty, his Servant *Moſes* retired, which the Courtiers perceiving, and fearing he was gone to call down more Plagues upon them, very roughly accoſted their King, deſiring him to let the *Iſraelites* go to ſerve their God, leſt he deſtroy them all for his Obſtinacy. Their Importunity prevailed more than God's Threats and Judgments; therefore ſending for *Moſes* and *Aaron*, he told them they might go and ſerve their God; but only the Men, not Women or Children. *Moſes* inſiſted upon all the *Iſraelites* going, young and old, Sons and Daughters; nay, and their Flocks and Herds: *For we muſt hold a Feaſt*, ſays he, *to the mighty* Jehovah, *and all muſt be at it.* This put *Pharoah* out of Temper, for he looked upon this Demand as very inſolent; therefore he bad them look to it, and conſider well what they inſiſted on, and in a very threatning Manner diſmiſs'd them.

The Servant of God being again repulſed, another Judgment was inflicted on the miſerable Subjects of an infidel King; for *Moſes* by the Divine Command ſtretched out his Hand with the Rod in it, and immediately a (*x*) ſcorching hot Wind blew all that Day and the Night following, which by next Morning drove endleſs Legions of devouring (*y*) Locuſts, which left the

(*x*) Scorching, &c. Our Tranſlation has *Eaſt Wind*. The Vulgar has *Ventum urentem*, a *burning Wind*. The *Septuagint*, a *South Wind*; which Opinion I follow, (though the *Jews* will unanimouſly have it to be an *Eaſt Wind*) becauſe the South Parts of *Africa* were moſt infeſted with Locuſts, where they are in ſome Places the chief Food of the inhabitants.

(*y*) Locuſts. They are like the Creature which we properly call a Graſs-hopper. Wonderful are the Accounts which Authors report of theſe Kinds of Armies of Locuſts, and of the Order and Regularity of their Marches. *Aldrovandus* and *Fincilius* ſay, That in the Year of our Lord 852, they were ſeen to fly over twenty Miles in *Germany* in one Day, in manner of a formed Army, divided into ſeveral Squadrons,

Earth as naked and depopulate, as if the Northern Storms of Winter had invaded it. The happy Product of the fertile *Nile*, and all that bountiful Nature afforded, was carried off by these airy Pillagers. *Pharaoh* began to be a little more sensibly touched with this Plague than any of the former; for he plainly foresaw that the Destruction of the Fruits of the Earth must in Time prove the Destruction of Man and Beast; therefore calling hastily for *Moses* and *Aaron*, he in a more suppliant Manner than usual addressed himself to them: *I have indeed offended* Jenovah, *your God, in refusing to obey his Command, and you in breaking my Word so often with you; forgive me this Offence, and intreat your God to avert this Judgment, that I and my People perish not by devouring Famine.*

Moses answered his Request, and once more compassionating the Case of the justly afflicted King, beseeched the Almighty in his Behalf, and the Locusts were driven by Force of a westerly Wind into the (z) *Red Sea*.

This Plague thus removed, *Pharaoh* returned to his former Obstinacy and Contempt of God's Commands, and refused to let the *Israelites* go.

CHAP. III.

The Plague of Darkness, Death of the First-born threatened. Institution of the Passover. Late Threatening fulfilled. Expulsion of the Israelites. *The First-born devoted to the Lord. God directs the* Israelites *by an extraordinary Token in their Passage out of* Egypt. *The* Israelites *are pursued by* Pharaoh, *who, together with his Host, are drowned in the* Red-Sea. *The* Israelites *praise God for their Deliverance.*

ALL these Methods proving ineffectual to reduce *Pharaoh* to Obedience to the Divine Command, God bid *Moses* stretch forth his Hand towards Heaven, that there might be Darkness over the Land of *Egypt*, so

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Squadrons, and having their Quarters apart when they rested; That the Captain marched a Day's Journey before the rest, to choose the most opportune Place for their Camp: That they never removed till Sun rising; at which Time they went away in as much Order as an Army of Men could do; that at last having done great Mischief whereseever they passed, after Prayers made to God, they were driven by a violent Wind into the *Belgick Ocean*, and there drowned; but being cast again by the Sea upon the Shore, caused a great Pestilence in the Country. Some add, that they covered an hundred and forty Acres of Land at a Time.

St. *Jerome* upon *Joel* speaks thus: "When "the Armies of Locusts came lately into these "Parts and filled all the Air, they flew in so "great Order, that Slates in a Pavement can-"not be laid more regularly, neither did they "stir one Inch out of their Ranks."

A Number of Locusts were seen and taken near *London* in 1748, which measured from two to four Inches long.

(z) Red-Sea. Various are the Opinions of Interpreters about the Epithet *Red* given to this Sea. Some will have it so called from the Reflection of the Sun upon it from the Red Mountains

thick that it might be (*a*) felt.

Moſes obeyed the Heavenly Command, and immediately ſuch ſolid Clouds of Darkneſs invaded the Sky, that Nature at once ſeemed to be involved in one dreadful Eclipſe; the Sun no longer encouraged the lower World with his chearful Beams; the Moon, with the Stars, no more illuminate the darkened Air; and all Things put on the diſmal Aſpect of Death, as if Nature were returning to her original Chaos.

This Scene of Horror laſted for three Days, which ſo effected the haughty King, that though he had long ſtood unmoveable againſt the Threatnings and Judgments of God; yet now fearing an univerſal Diſſolution, and frighted at the continual (*b*) Terrors of this long Night, he began to relent a little, and calling for *Moſes*, ſaid to him, *Ye may go with your little ones, and ſerve the Lord; but for my Security, I would have you leave your Flocks and Herds behind you.*

As this was not abſolutely conſiſtent with the Divine Command, *Moſes* would not deign to accept it; aſſuring him, that it was the expreſs Command of their God to remove with all their Subſtance; and that they knew not in what Manner they were to offer Sacrifice to their God, till they came to the Wilderneſs.

The haughty Tyrant, incenſed at his Non-compliance with what he himſelf eſteemed a very great Indulgence, commanded him to be gone; and aſſured him, that if ever he appeared before him again, it ſhould coſt him his Life.

Moſes took him at his Word, and promiſed never more to ſee his Face; but before he left his Preſence, he denounced this Judgment to him: *Thus ſaith the Lord, About Midnight will I enter* Egypt, *and all the Firſt-born of the Land ſhall die, from the Firſt-born of* Pharaoh *that ſhould ſucceed him in the Throne, to the Firſt-born of the Servant in the Mill; and all the Firſt-born of Beaſts ſhall die.*

And to poſſeſs *Pharaoh* and his Subjects with the greater Fear of this Judgment, he told them, There ſhould be ſuch great Lamentations through all *Egypt*, as never was known before. And to convince them of his Care and Indulgence of his own People, he told

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tains near it. Others, that it is naturally *Red* of itſelf. *Pliny. lib.* 6. *cap.* 23. ſays, it is called by the *Greeks*, *Erythræum Mare*, or *Red Sea*, from *Erythra* the King, and Son of *Perſeus*, whoſe Sepulchre is reported to be in *Tirina*, an Iſland of the *Red Sea*.

(*a*) Felt. So the *Septuagint* and moſt Tranſlations render it. Some will have this to be an Hyperbolical Expreſſion, to ſet forth the Exceſs of this Plague: Though whether this Darkneſs was really in the Air, or only in their Eyes, which might be blinded for a Time; or whether a Suſpenſion of Light from the Act of Illumination in that country; or whether it were from a black, thick and damp Vapour, which poſſeſs'd all the Air, it is impoſſible to determine.

(*b*) Terrors. It is the Opinion of ſeveral, that during this three Days Darkneſs, the *Egyptians* were frighted with terrible Viſions and Spectres; which Opinion is very much ſtrengthened in *Wiſdom*, xvii. 6. Undoubtedly from ſuch unuſual Darkneſs they thought the whole Order of the World to be overſet and diſſolved.

Month

the *Egyptians*, that not the leaſt Harm ſhould befall the *Iſraelites*.

Though the King ſtill bid him Defiance, to let him ſee he deſpiſed his Threats, he told him, he would ſo humble his Subjects with the ſucceeding Plague, that even his Counſellers and Prime Miniſters of State ſhould come and fall down at his Feet and intreat him and the *Iſraelites* to be gone. And after that, ſaid *Moſes*, I will go out.

Having thus delivered his laſt Meſſage to the King of *Egypt* with a more than uſual Warmth of Zeal, he took his Leave.

As the choſen People of God were not only oppreſſed in their Perſons, but alſo in their Property, by the Tyranny of the *Egyptians*, it pleaſed the Lord, to encourage his Servant *Moſes* to ſupport them in their Deliverance from Bondage, to promiſe them Favour with their former Oppreſſors, and Inſtruct him to borrow of them their moſt valuable Commodities.

It was on the fourteenth Day of the firſt (*c*) Month that *Moſes* took his Leave of *Pharaoh*: And God, having predetermined his People's Deliverance at this Time, had inſtituted the Paſſover ſome Days before, and given Direction to *Moſes* how it ſhould be obſerved; which was after this Manner.

Every Family of *Iſrael*, or if the Family was too little, two neighbouring Families joining together, was on the tenth Day of this Month, to take a Lamb, or Kid, and ſhut it up till the fourteenth Day of this Month; and then it was to be killed.

The Lamb or Kid muſt be a Male of the firſt Year, and without Blemiſh; [a Type of Chriſt, who was perfectly innocent.] When it was killed, they were to take a Bunch of Hyſſop, and dipping it in the Blood, which for that End was preſerved in a Veſſel, they were to wipe the upper Door-poſt, and the Side-poſts of the outer Door of every Houſe where they did eat it; and they were not to ſtir out of the Houſe till the next Morning.

This was done to the Intent, that when the Angel of the Lord ſhould go from Houſe to Houſe through all *Egypt*, to ſlay the Firſt-born of both Man and Beaſt of the *Egyptians*; he ſeeing the Blood ſmeared on the Door-poſts, might paſs over thoſe Houſes, wherein the *Iſraelites* were eating the Lamb or Kid, without doing them any Hurt: And from the Angel's thus paſſing over their Houſes, this Inſtitution was called the Paſſover. The Lamb or Kid was to be eaten neither raw nor ſodden, but roaſted with Fire, and to be dreſs'd whole:

(*c*) Month. The *Iſraelites*, till they had been Captives in *Babylon*, which was about eight hundred Years after they came out of *Egypt*, counted their Months without any Name according to their Number, the Firſt, Second, Third Month, &c. And before their coming out of *Egypt*, they began their Years in that Month, which was afterwards called *Tiſri* (which took in Part of the ſeventh and Part of the eighth Month with us) and they continued always after to begin their Year with that Month for Civil Affairs, according to which Computation, that Month, which was afterwards *Niſan* in which God delivered *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, was their ſeventh. And this *Niſan* anſwers to Part of thoſe two Months, which from the *Heathen Romans* are commonly called *March* and *April*.

Lord

nor might a Bone of it be broken. It was to be eaten with unleavened Bread, and with bitter Herbs, in Memory of the ſevere Bondage they had undergone in *Egypt*. If there remained more than could be eaten, it was to be burnt; and no Stranger might eat of it, unleſs he was circumciſed. As to the Manner of eating it, at this Time only, they were to eat it as in haſte, with their Cloaths on, and their Staves in their Hands: Which Ceremony ſhew'd their eager Deſire of Deliverance, and their Readineſs for it.

Theſe Precautions being taken in Obedience to the divine Command, for the Preſervation of the *Iſraelites*, at Midnight the (*d*) Lord ſmote all the Firſt-born in the Land of *Egypt*, from the Firſt-born of *Pharaoh*, to the Firſt-born of the (*e*) Captive that was in the Dungeon; and all the Firſt-born of the Cattle were ſmitten, as the Lord had that Morning denounced to *Pharaoh* and *Moſes*.

This ſevere ſtroke of divine Vengeance at length alarmed the obdurate *Pharaoh* and blinded Subjects, who waked each other with their diſmal Cries, and the Horror of the Night added to their Confuſion; the expiring Groans of their beloved Firſt-born deeply affected them, and they expected a Succeſſion of Death upon themſelves; *Pharaoh* hoping to avert an untimely Death, in Haſte ſent for *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and commanded them to be gone with all Speed. *Get you forth*, ſays he, *from among my People, both you and the Children of* Iſrael, *and go ſerve your God as ye have ſaid; and take your Flocks and your Herds, as ye demanded, and be gone: I'll ſtand no longer on Terms with you, only pray for me, that this Plague may go no further.* Nor were the People leſs importunate for them to be gone; for they concluded, if the *Iſraelites* tarried any longer among them, that they ſhould all die.

Moſes having by God's expreſs Command directed the Children of *Iſrael* to borrow of their *Egyptian* Neighbours Jewels of Silver and Gold, and the Lord having diſpoſed the *Egyptians* to lend them what they aſked for, they by theſe Means (*g*) ſpoiled the *Egyptians* of their moſt valuable Things: Nay, ſo fearful were they

(*d*) Lord. Some think God inflicted this Plague upon the *Egyptians* immediately himſelf; becauſe he ſays, *Exod.* xi. 4. *About Midnight will I go out into the Midſt of* Egypt. And to the ſame affect, *Ch.* xii. 12. But it is an ordinary Manner of Speech to attribute that to God, which is done by one of his Angels; and that this was an Angel, appears out of *Ch.* xii. 23. *The Lord will paſs over the Door, and will not ſuffer the Deſtroyer to come into your Houſes to ſmite you.*

(*e*) Captive, That is, thoſe meaner Servants, that are put to grinding, as *Samſon* afterwards was, when he had loſt at once both his Eyes and Liberty.

(*g*) Spoiled. This was not to be drawn into an Example, how excuſable and juſtifiable ſoever in the *Iſraelites*, on the Account that God, who is the Sovereign Lord of all, both Perſons and Things, did ſo order it; and that it might be looked on as a juſt Retribution for the many and great Injuries done by the *Egyptians* to the *Iſraelites*.

that ſome heavy Judgment would attend their longer Continuance among them, that they forced them away, not ſuffering them to finiſh their Bread, but obliging them to tie up their Dough in Cloths, and carry it away at their Backs unbaked.

The Lord having thus avenged on the *Egyptians*, the Obſtinacy of their King, in detaining his People in Bondage; they now on a ſudden thruſt them out, as God had foretold, and drove them away in great Haſte.

So punctual were the ancient Servants of God in complying with the Requeſt of their dying Friends or Relations, or any who had Signalized themſelves in the Service of the Faithful, that we find Men notwithſtanding the haſty departure of the *Iſraelites*, did not forget to take the Bones of *Joſeph*, which he, dying in the Faith of their Deliverance, had ſolemnly engaged the Children of *Iſrael* to carry up out of *Egypt* with them, and which had now lain entombed there more than a hundred and forty Years.

The Place of general Rendezvous for the *Iſrae'lites* was *Rameſes*, the chief City of *Goſhen*; from whence, on the fifteenth Day of their (*m*) firſt Month, they ſet forward as regularly as a well-ordered Army, being in Number about ſix hundred thouſand Men, beſides Children, and marched to *Succoth*. With them went a mixed Multitude that were not *Iſraelites*, but Strangers of ſeveral Nations, who, having ſeen the Calamities that *Egypt* had ſuffered for *Iſrael*'s Sake, choſe rather to ſeek their Fortunes with the *Iſrae'ites*, than tarry in a Country almoſt made deſolate.

To perpetuate the (*n*) Remembrance of this glorious Diſplay of divine Power and Goodneſs, in their Behalf, God, by *Moſes*, commanded the People of *Iſrael*, that when they ſhould be brought into the Land of *Canaan*, they ſhould ſet apart, and devote unto the Lord their Firſt-born, both of Man and Beaſt, as a Token that God, for their Sakes, had ſlain all the Firſt-born in *Egypt*.

The *Iſrae'ites* being to remove from *Succoth*, the Lord, for their Encouragement and Security, went before them, in the Day-time in a Pillar of Cloud, and by Night in a Pillar of Fire, to direct and guide them; and though the *Philiſtines* Country was the neareſt for them to paſs; yet, leſt they, ſeeing them with an armed Force oppoſe their Paſſage, ſhould repent of their Deliverance, and wilfully turn back to *Egypt*, he led them about through the Way of the Wilderneſs of the *Red-ſea*, and marching to *Etham* they incamped there on the Borders of the Wilderneſs, which took its Name from that Place. From thence drawing them down more to

(*m*) Firſt Month. This was afterwards called *Niſan*, and *Abib*, which takes in Part of the firſt, and Part of the ſecond Month with us.

(*n*) Remembrance. This Remembrance is twice expreſs'd in the thirteenth of *Exod. v.* 9, 16. and undoubtedly cannot be taken in a literal Senſe.

Chariots.

The **Iſraelites** *Departing out of* **EGYPT**, Exodus, Ch. XII. Ver. 34.

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the *Red Sea*, he cauſed them to incamp there, between the Straits of the Mountains, in Sight of the Sea. This was the divine Pleaſure, that the Almighty *Jehovah*, might more fully triumph over the *Egyptians* Tyrant: For he had told *Moſes*, that *Pharaoh* would ſay, They were intangled in the Wilderneſs; and that he would harden *Pharaoh*'s Heart, that he ſhould purſue them, and be deſtroyed. This ſucceeded accordingly; for, after the *Egyptians* had buried their dead Firſt-born, *Pharaoh*, being told that the *Iſraelites* were gone, and concluding, from their long and ſpeedy Marches, that they fled indeed, repented that he had let them go: His Bounty in diſmiſſing the inſlaved *Iſraelites* ſcarce ſurvived his Deliverance from the Angel's ſlaughtering Hand, and Rage and Revenge ſucceeded to his late Fear and Grief for the Death of the Firſt-born: He forgot the Almighty Power, that by a Succeſſion of Plagues had ſo lately afflicted him and his People, and regardleſs of the Danger of provoking it again, blindly purſued his own Fate, inſtead of the *Iſraelites*.

Raiſing all the Force, which the Shortneſs of the Time would admit, he headed them, and immediately purſued the departing *Iſraelites*, in order to enſlave them deeper.

He had with him ſix hundred choſen (*o*) Chariots, and all the Chariots of *Egypt* beſides, that could be got ready at ſo ſhort a Warning, with their Commanders, and (*p*) Horſemen, with which he purſued them; and on the ſixth day, after their Departure out of *Egypt*, came up with them, and found them encamped by the Sea; ſo that, as he had propoſed to himſelf, he found the *Iſraelites* beſet on every Side, the Sea in front, huge Mountains on their Flank, and his own Army in their Rear.

The Sight of this Army, and their old Oppreſſor at the Head of them, ſtruck Terror into the poor *Iſraelites*, who, ſoon forgetting their new-gotten Liberty, betrayed a ſervile Mind, and envied the ſlaviſh Condition they but lately deplored.

They reproached *Moſes* as the Author of all their imaginary Woes, and wiſhed to reſume the Yoke they had but now ſhaken off. Long Cuſtom had innured them to a State of Slavery, and continual Servitude of Body debaſed their Spirits.

But pious *Moſes*, not reſenting their reproachful Taunts, but pitying their abject Fear, cheared them up with the Aſſurance of God's Protection and Care, and ſaid, *The Lord will fight for you, and complete your Deliverance; and this numerous Army of the* Egyptians, *which now terrifieth you, ſhall no more affright or moleſt you.*

Moſes, before this encouraging As-

(*o*) Chariots. Theſe are the firſt Chariots that were uſed in War; in which it was the Cuſtom long after for Soldiers to fight. They were armed with Scythes, and, being drawn by Horſes againſt the Enemy, they cut down all in their Way; the Men in them uſing Darts and Spears, and ſuch like offenſive Weapons, to annoy the Enemy.

(*p*) Horſemen. *Joſephus* writes, that, beſides theſe Chariots, *Pharaoh* took with him fifty thouſand Horſemen, and two hundred thouſand Footmen.

ſurance, had addreſſed himſelf to God, who admoniſhed him no more at this Juncture to apply himſelf to him, but to preſs the murmuring *Iſraelites* to move forward, giving him Inſtructions how to ſecure his People, and afflict their Enemies.

The ſacred Rod, by which *Moſes* had formerly wrought ſo many Miracles, ſtill retained its Virtues, as inimitable; but now more fatally deſtructive: *Lift up thy Rod*, ſaith the Lord, *and ſtretch thy Hand over the Sea, and divide it; and the Children of* Iſrael *ſhall go on dry Land (q) through the midſt of the Sea: and I will harden the Hearts of the* Egyptians, *that they ſhall purſue them; and there will I get me Honour upon the Ruin of* Pharoah, *and his mighty Army.*

To convince the doubting, intimidated *Iſraelites* of the peculiar Favour and Regard which God bore toward them, as his choſen People, the Angel of God, which went before the Camp of *Iſrael*, in the Pillar of the Cloud, removed and went behind them, by which Means it kept the two Camps apart all Night; and the Cloudy Side, being next the *Egyptians*, caſt a Darkneſs towards them; but the Fiery Side, being next to the *Iſraelites* gave them Light.

Iſrael being thus ſecured from the terrifying Sight of their Enemies, *Moſes* waved the ſacred Rod over the Sea, and immediately a ſtrong Eaſt-Wind blew, and drove the Sea back from the Land; and, dividing the Waters, made a dry and ſafe Paſſage for the *Iſraelites*, who, under the Conduct of their great Guide, entered the ſandy Plain, and, with Amaſement, beheld the, till then, ſecret Wonders of the Deep. Enchanted with the Floods, they boldly marched on, and inſtead of being terrified with the Sight of a purſuing Enemy, were entertained with the pleaſing View of the Sea's old Spoils, and the Treaſures of the divided Main.

The *Egyptians* actuated by Fury and Revenge purſued the Tract, and not ſuſpecting but that they with their Chariots and Horſemen might ſafely follow where the *Iſraelites* being but Footmen, went before, enter in after them to the midſt of the Sea. But when in the Morning (r) Watch the Lord had looked through the Pillar of Fire and Cloud upon the *Egyptians*, and throwing their Chariots off the Wheels, had diſordered their Army: the *Egyptians* ſaw their Error, and ſaid one to another, *Let us fly from the Face of* Iſrael, *for* Jehovah, *fight-*

(q) Through. That the *Iſraelites* went not directly croſs the Sea from Shore to Shore, but took a ſemi-circular Compaſs in the Sea, and returned on Shore on the ſame Side, is the Opinion of many learned Men, both ancient and modern. And indeed their going out of the Wilderneſs of *Etham* into the Sea, and their Coming out of the Sea into the Wilderneſs of *Etham* again (as it is plain they did) and went three Days Journey in the Wilderneſs of *Etham* after they came out at the Sea, gives much Countenance to that Opinion.

(r) Watch. This is reckoned to begin at the *third*, and reach to the *ſixth* Hour in the Morning.

Song

eth for them againſt us. But it was too late to fly; for *Moſes* at God's Command waving the ſacred Wand again, the Sea returned to its Strength; and the divided Parts ſuddenly uniting, covered the thirſty Bottom, whilſt Horror and Confuſion invaded the frighted *Egyptians.* They heard and ſaw the roaring Waves break looſe from their inviſible Chain, and with helpleſs Speed endeavoured to avoid their relentleſs Fury, but in vain; the mighty God of *Jacob* will avenge himſelf on the obſtinate Infidels, and their Ruin ſhall be a laſting Monument of his Juſtice and his Vengeance.

Thus did the Lord reſcue the *Iſraelites* from the King of *Egypt*, and his mighty Army; which being caſt on the Shore, was a delightful Spectacle to the *Iſraelites*, and a Confirmation of the Power of their Almighty God, who had delivered them from inevitable Ruin. This created an awful Reverence in Them, not only to God himſelf, but his Servant *Moſes* their happy Guide, by whoſe Hand God had wrought ſo many Wonders for their Preſervation and Safety.

Being now ſafely got to Shore again, *Moſes* and the *Iſraelites* in grateful Acknowledgment of their Deliverance, ſung a triumphant *(r)* Song; in which *Miriam* the Propheteſs, Siſter to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, joined, taking a Timbrel in her Hand, and followed by the *Iſraelitiſh* Women with Timbrels and Dances, anſwered the Men, repeatedly and alternately, ſome Parts of the Song.

(r) Song. This Song is ſet down in *Exod.* xv. from *v.* 1 to 20. and which in the *Revelations*, *Ch.* xv. 7. has the Honour to be joined to the Song of the Lamb.

CHAP. IV.

Dearth of Water. Bitter Waters are ſweetened. Dearth of Bread. Proviſion is ſent from Heaven. People again murmur on Account of a Dearth of Water. Are miraculouſly ſupplied. Iſrael *overcomes* Amalek. Moſes *entertains* Jethro, *and taketh his Advice. God's Meſſage from the Mount, and terrible Appearance.*

HAVING thus rendered their grateful Tribute of Praiſe to their Almighty Deliverer, *Moſes* led the Children of *Iſrael* from the *Red Sea* into the Deſart of *Shur* or *Etham*, in which they marched three Days without finding any Water; which to ſo great a Number of People, in ſo hot a Country and Seaſon, muſt needs be very irkſome. But at length they came to a Place where there was Water enough, but ſo *(t)* bitter, that they could not drink it. This Diſappointment inflamed their Thirſt, and increaſed their Diſatisfaction; and though it was but three or four Days ſince they ſo joyfully and thankfully praiſed God for their Deliverance from the Oppreſſions of the *Egyptians*, yet

(t) Bitter. From the Bitterneſs of the Waters, the Place took the Name of *Marah*, which ſignifies Bitterneſs.

they murmured againſt *Moſes*, aſking him what they ſhould drink?

Moſes was ſenſible of the Calamity under which they laboured; and fearing they ſhould by their future Murmurings provoke the Lord to puniſh them as they deſerved, he ſtraightway addreſſed himſelf to him in their Behalf; who no ſooner heard the Complaint, but redreſſed it; directed *Moſes* to a Tree, which when he had caſt into the Waters, they became ſweet, and the People ſatisfied their Thirſt.

Their preſſing Wants being thus wonderfully and amply ſupplied, it might be imagined that after this, and ſo many former Tokens of the Interpoſition of the divine Power and Goodneſs in their Behalf, they would no longer miſtruſt the Goodneſs of their Covenant-God; but their Faith ſcarcely ſurvived his Miracles.

From *Marah* they marched to *Elim*, where they found better Accommodations; for there were *(u)* twelve Wells of Water, and ſeventy Palm, or Date Trees.

Here it may be ſuppoſed they made ſome Stay; for when they removed from hence, and came to the Wilderneſs of *Sin*, which is between *Elim* and *Sinai*, it was the fifteenth Day of the ſecond Month, which was juſt a Month from the Day on which they ſet forward out of *Egypt*.

Here again the *Iſraelites* fell into a general Mutiny againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*. The Sight of a barren Wilderneſs, and Shortneſs of Proviſions, made them diſtruſt God, and break into very indecent Expreſſions; *Would to God*, cry'd they in their Diſcontent, *we had died by the Hand of the Lord in the Land of* Egypt, *where we had Plenty of Bread and Meat; for now ye have brought us into this Deſart, where we muſt periſh with Famine.*

This ingrateful Treatment of his Servants, the Lord reſented, as done to himſelf, and of which *Moſes* and *Aaron* made them ſenſible; for, ſaid they, *Your Murmurings are not only againſt us, but againſt the Lord; who hath heard them, and ye ſhall ſoon know that it was the Lord that brought you out of* Egypt; *whoſe Arm is not ſhortened, but can make a Proviſion for you as miraculous as your Deliverance.*

The Lord therefore, to awe this murmuring People into a Belief of his Power and Providence, having firſt ſhewed his Glory in the Cloud, told them by *Moſes*, that at Evening they ſhould eat Fleſh, and in the Morning be filled with Bread; which he made good, by cauſing Quails to come up ſo thick in the Evening, that they covered the Camp, and aforded the *Iſraelites* a Sufficiency of Fleſh.

And in the Morning, when the Dew was gone, there lay upon the Ground a little white round Thing, as ſmall as the Hoar Froſt, and like Coriander Seed for Shape; which when the *Iſraelites* ſaw, they wondering ſaid

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(u) Twelve. St. *Jerome* and *Tertullian* not inelegantly make theſe twelve Fountains or Wells of Water to be a Type of the twelve Apoſtles, and ſeventy Palm-trees of the ſeventy Diſciples of Chriſt.

one to another, (*w*) What is this? For they knew not what it was. But God was pleaſed by *Moſes* to give them a Direction in the Gathering and Uſe of it.

Firſt, it was to be gathered freſh (*x*) every Morning; all that was gathered was to be ſpent the ſame Day. And when ſome of them, either out of Curioſity or Diffidence, that they might have a Reſerve, kept ſome of it till the next Morning, it putrefied and ſtunk. They were to gather it by Meaſure, according to the Number of Heads in every Family.

On the ſeventh Day, which was the Sabbath, there was none to be found; therefore they were to gather a double Portion on the ſixth Day, and lay it up for the ſeventh Day, which being kept by God's Appointment, and for that Uſe did not corrupt.

This was to them inſtead of Bread, and of this they did eat forty Years, till they arrived on the Borders of *Canaan*. And as a Memorial of it, that After-generations might ſee the Bread with which he had fed their Forefathers in the Wilderneſs, God appointed that an (*y*) Omer of this Manna ſhould be put up in a Pot, and be laid up before the Lord.

The Almighty not only ſupplied the Wants of the diſcontented *Iſraelites* in the moſt ample Manner; but farther to convince them of his peculiar Favour and Regard, directed their Marches from Place to Place, and ordered their Incampments.

Accordingly they moved from the Deſart of *Sin*, and encamped in (*z*) *Rephidim*, where they had no Water. Here again they fell into their old Way of diſtruſting God's Providence, which they well knew had never hitherto failed them; and forgetting the late miraculous Supplies, they reproached *Moſes* for his ill Conduct and Neglect of them. *Moſes* meekly rebuked them, and cautioned them not to reflect on him, for in ſo doing, they affronted the Lord. But Thirſt inflaming them, they regarded not his Cautions, and grew more mutinous, charging him with a Deſign of bringing them out of *Egypt* to kill them with Thirſt.

(*w*) What &c. Our Tranſlation, and ſome others, make *Moſes* fall into a plain Contradiction in relating this Story of the *Manna*, *Exod.* xvi. 14. which they render thus; *And when the Children of* Iſrael *ſaw it, they ſaid to one another it is Manna, for they wiſt not what it was.* But why ſhould they have forſaken the *Septuagint*, and ſeveral Authors both ancient and modern, that have tranſlated this Text according to the Original? *The* Iſraelites *ſeeing, this, ſaid one to another, What is this? For they knew not what it was.*

(*x*) Every Morning. This was to ſignify to the *Iſraelites*, that they ſhould patiently depend upon God's Providence from Day to Day; in which reſpect it might be a Type of that *heavenly Bread*, which Chriſt taught his Diſciples to pray for, *Mat.* vi. 11. *Give us this Day our daily Bread.*

(*y*) Omer. This was the Proportion daily allowed to one Man, and is computed to contain of *Engliſh* Meaſure three Pints and a half, and a fifth Part of a Pint.

(*z*) Rephidim. *Exod.* xvii 1. *Moſes* does not here obſerve every Place where the *Iſraelites* incamped, as he doth in *Numb.* xxxiii. but only theſe Places where ſome remarkable Thing was done.

Amalekites,

These Complaints and Reproaches deeply affected *Moſes*, who immediately addreſſed himſelf to God for Relief in this Diſtreſs, expoſtulating with him thus; *What ſhall I do with this People? Thirſt makes them impatient, and they are ready to ſtone me.* Conſidering the many Inſtances of God's Providence, notwithſtanding their preſent Neceſſity, the *Iſraelites* had no Reaſon to diſtruſt. However, the Lord had Compaſſion on *Moſes*, and did alſo pity and bear with the People; *Give Order to the People*, ſaid he, *to march; and take thy Rod, with which thou didſt ſmite the River. and take the Elders of the People with thee, and go thou on before; and behold, I will ſtand before thee upon the Rock in* Horeb, *and thou ſhalt ſtrike the Rock, which ſhall yield Water for the People to drink.*

Moſes did as God commanded, and in Memory of the Mutiny of the *Iſraelites*, he named the Place *Maſſah* and *Meribah*, which ſignified Temptation and Strife.

But the Faith and Fortitude of the *Iſraelites* were put to a more ſevere Trial before they could remove from *Rephidim*; for an Army of the (*a*) *Amalekites* was at their Heels, and ready to attack them. *Moſes* thereupon ordered *Joſhua*, a valiant young Man that always attended him, to draw out a Party of choice Men againſt the next Morning, and to give the *Amalekites* battle; and ſaid, *I will ſtand on the Top of the Hill, with the Rod of God in my Hand.*

Joſhua obey'd; and having drawn up his Men, *Moſes* in the Morning, while the two Armies engaged, went up to the Top of the Hill, taking *Aaron* and *Hur* with him, and holding up the Rod of God, as an Enſign in his Hand, *Iſrael* taking Courage from thence prevailed; but when, thro' Wearineſs, he let his Hand down, *Amalek* prevailed: therefore *Aaron* and *Hur*, obſerving that *Moſes*'s Hands, through a continued waving of the Rod, were grown feeble and weary, took a Stone, and laid it under him, and ſtanding on each Side of him, held up his Hands ſteady till the going down of the Sun; in which Time *Joſhua* routed the *Amalekite* Army, and put them to the Sword.

This Succeſs in their firſt martial Enterpriſe very much encouraged *Joſhua* and the *Iſraelites*; and that ſo remarkable an Action might be tranſmitted to Poſterity, God commanded it to be recorded in a Book, and bid *Moſes* rehearſe it to *Joſhua* the General to animate him to future Service; for, ſaith the Lord, *I will utterly put out the Remembrance of* Amalek *from under Heaven.*

And for a Memorial of this Victory, *Moſes* built an Altar to ſacrifice thereon for it, and called it (*b*) *Jehovah Niſſi*; becauſe, ſaid he, the Lord hath ſworn that he will have War with *Amalek* from Generation to Generation.

The *Iſraelites* ſoon after came near to the Place where God firſt appeared to *Moſes* in the Burning Buſh, and not

(*a*) Amalekites. Theſe were a people decended from *Amalek*, the Grandſon of *Eſau*. See *Gen.* xxxvi. 12.

(*b*) Jehovah Niſſi. That is, the Lord is my Banner, as he declared by holding up his Rod and his Hands.

MOSES STRIKING *the* ROCK. *Exodus 17. 6*

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far from his Father-in-law *Jethro*'s Habitation: *Jethro* having heard of all that God had done for *Moſes* and his People *Iſrael*, and underſtanding they were now near him, took his Daughter *Zipporah*, *Moſes*'s Wife, with their two Sons, *Gerſhom* and *Eliezer*, and brought them to him to the *Iſraeliti*ſh Camp; where, after mutual Salutations and Embracings, *Moſes* gave *Jethro* a particular Account of the Lord's dealing with *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* in Defence of *Iſrael*, and of all that had befallen them during their March thither.

Jethro being a (*c*) devout Man, teſtified his Joy by rendering ſolemn Praiſe to God, and acknowledging his Sovereignty, offering at the ſame Time a Burnt-offering and Sacrifices of Thankſgiving to God, in which *Aaron* and all the Elders of *Iſrael* joined with him, and feaſted together.

During *Jethro*'s Stay in the Camp, he obſerved the great Weight of Buſineſs under which *Moſes* laboured, in hearing the Complaints, and determining the Differences of ſo great a People; and therefore, being a wiſe and experienced Man himſelf, he adviſed his Son-in-law to ſubſtitute certain ſubordinate Officers, properly qualified, Men of Sincerity and Abilities, ſuch as feared God, and hated Covetouſneſs, to be Rulers; ſome over Thouſands, ſome over Hundreds, ſome over Fifties, and ſome over Tens, who ſhould hear and end all ſmaller Matters among the People, and refer the greater and more weighty Cauſes only to him; aſſuring him, that if with God's Approbation he did follow this Advice, it would be better both for the People and himſelf.

Moſes approved of his Counſel, and immediately put it in Practice, to the great Eaſe of himſelf and the People. *Jethro* ſeeing Things thus ſettled, took his Leave of his Son-in-law, and returned to his own Land.

Three (*d*) Months after the miraculous Deliverance of the *Iſraelites* from *Egyptian* Bondage, they left *Rephidim*, and encamped in the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, before the Mount of God.

Here it pleaſed God to ſummons his Servant *Moſes*, and command him to remind his People *Iſrael*, of the ſignal Proofs he had given of his gracious Regard; and alſo to aſſure them, that tho' they had miſtruſted both his Truth and Power, yet if they would conſtantly bear in Mind the Covenant he had eſtabliſhed with them, he would manifeſt farther Tokens of his Love toward them, and ſignalize them from all other Nations upon Earth, as a People more immediately devoted to the Service of their God.

Moſes having communicated this to the Elders and People, they unanimouſly anſwered, That whatſoever the

(*c*) Devout. *Jethro* being ſprung from the Loins of *Abraham* by *Keturah* his ſecond Wife, though not of the Seed of Promiſe, it is evident that he worſhiped the true God, and therefore *Moſes* refuſed not to marry his Daughter.

(*d*) Months. This was in the Beginning of the Month *Sivan*, containing Part of *May* and *June*.

Deſcend

Lord had commanded them, they would obediently perform. *Moſes* returned the People's Anſwer to God, who ſaid to *Moſes*. *I will come to you in the Darkneſs of a Cloud, that the People may ſee ſomething of me, when I ſhall ſpeak to you, and may always believe you.*

Then he commanded him to direct the People to cleanſe themſelves, and to waſh their Garments during two Days, and to be ready the third Day, on which the Lord would (*e*) deſcend in the Sight of all the People on Mount *Sinai*; that he ſhould mark out Bounds about the Mountain, which none was to paſs before the Trumpet began to ſound.

Theſe were the preparatory Solemnities to the Lord's giving the (*g*) Law; after which followed divers judicial Laws intermixed with ſome Ceremonials, and backed with Promiſes of Bleſſings upon People's Obedience.

All this *Moſes*, wrote in a Book, and then read it to the People; and having, by God's Command, brought up *Aaron* with his two Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and ſeventy of the Elders of *Iſrael*, ſo near that they ſaw the Divine Majeſty, yet they were not ſmitten by it, but ſurvived the Sight.

CHAP. V.

Moſes *goes up to the Mount with* Joſhua, *and commits the Charge of his People to* Aaron *and* Hur. *Receives the Tables of Stone on which were inſcribed the Words of the Law. Various Ceremonie, inſtituted.* Aaron *contributes to the Idolatry of the People, who are ſeverely chaſtized by* Moſes *on his Return. God threatens the People. Converſes familiarly with* Moſes, *whoſe Face ſhines with uncommon Luſtre. Building of the Tabernacle, and ſettling other Holy Concerns.*

SOON after *Moſes*, at the Divine Command, aſcended the Mount, together with *Joſhua* only, dictating the Elders to tarry for them till they ſhould return, and referring them to *Aaron* and *Hur* for Aſſiſtance and Advice in any difficult Caſe that might be brought before them. *Moſes* was no ſooner got up to the Mountain of God, but a Cloud covered the Mount, and the Glory of the Lord abode upon it like a devouring Fire, in the Sight of the Children of *Iſrael*. The ſeventh Day God called *Moſes* from the midſt of the Fire, and he entered the midſt of the Cloud, and went further up the

(*e*) Deſcend. It muſt be obſerved here, and likewiſe in other Places of the ſame Nature, that the Scripture, ſuiting itſelf to Man's common Way of ſpeaking and Thinking, aſſigns ſuch Things to God, as are only proper to the Effects. It is ſaid that God deſcended on the Mountain, becauſe he made his Preſence more viſible there, by ſenſible and ſurprizing Effects. It may be alſo ſaid, it was an Angel deſcended from God, who ſpoke to *Moſes*, and gave the Law; but the Text expreſſes, *Exod.* xix. 20. that it was God himſelf, who deſcended upon the Top of Mount *Sinai*.

(*g*) Law. Which contained the Ten Commandments, from thence called the *Decalogue*.

Diſcourſe

Mount, and remained there forty Days and as many Nights. During which Time he received the Tables of Stone, wherein God himſelf had written the Law; and was inſtructed by God how the Tent or Tabernacle ſhould be made, wherein he ſhould be worſhipped.

He likewiſe deſcribed the Sanctuary, the Table for the Shew-bread, the Altar of Frankincenſe, the Altar for the Burnt-offerings, the Court of the Tabernacle, the Baſon to waſh in, the Ark, the Candleſtick, the Prieſtly Veſtments, and taught him how the Prieſts were to be conſecrated, what Part of the Offering they were to take, and how the perpetual Sacrifice was to be offered. God likewiſe pitched upon the very Men to undertake the Building, *Beza'eel* of the Tribe of *Judah*, and *Aholiab* of the Tribe of *Dan*.

In fine, he recommended the keeping of the Sabbath, and having ended the (*i*) Diſcourſe, gave *Moſes* two Stone Tables, containing the Covenant or Law, which were written by the Hand of God.

Whilſt *Moſes* was converſing with God upon the Mount, and *Joſhua* dutifully waiting his Return, the People in the Camp growing impatient of his long Abſence, tumultuouſly repaired to *Aaron*; and, as if they deſpaired of God's Protection, becauſe he did not continually work Miracles to convince them, they concluded *Moſes* had deſerted them; and therefore demanded of *Aaron* to make them Gods to go before them.

Aaron, who ſhould have reſtrained them from this Madneſs, too eaſily complied; and for want of reproving and expoſtulating with them the Unreaſonableneſs of their wild Deſire, contributed to their Idolatry; and, as if he had a Mind to forward them in this wicked Intention, he bid them break off the golden (*k*) Rings, which were in the Ears of their Wives and Children, and bring them to him. When he had received theſe, he tied them in a Bag, and made a molten (*l*) Calf of them, which they owned for their God, ſaying, *This is thy God, O* Iſrael, *that brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt. *Aaron* ſeeing the People ſo much delighted with their golden God, as if he were poſſeſſed with the ſame idolatrous Spirit, built an Altar before it, and proclaimed a Feaſt to be holden the next Day to the Lord. But it proved rather a feaſt of Revelling and Luxury; for after they had made their Oblations and Peace-offerings, they ſat

(*i*) Diſcourſe. See the Particulars from the twenty third to the thirty ſecond *Chapter* of *Exodus*.

(*k*) *Rings*. Theſe probably were the ſame which they had borrowed of the *Egyptians*.

(*l*) Calf. The Reaſon why they worſhipped God rather in the Similitude of a Calf, than of any other Creature, is generally by Expoſitors conceived to be from the Corruptions they had learned among the *Egyptians*, (who worſhipped their Idol *Apis* or *Serapis* in a living Ox, and likewiſe in an Image made in the Form and Similitude of an Ox with a Buſhel on his Head) in Memory, as ſome ſay, of *Pharaoh's* Dreams, and *Joſeph's* Providence, who meaſured out the Corn to the People in that extream Dearth.

Thy

down to eat and drink, and ſpent the whole Day in Feaſting and Pleaſure.

Moſes was in the Mount converſing with his God, while the wanton *Iſraelites* were revelling in the Camp, little ſuſpecting ſo ſudden a Change in a People who had ſo late and ſolemnly entered into a Covenant of Obedience to all that God ſhould command. But he, from whom no Secret can be hid, was inſtantly appriſed of his ſudden Revolt; therefore telling *Moſes* what Crime the People had committed, he expreſſed his Indignation againſt their Rebellion and Ingratitude; *Go down*, ſaith he, *for* (m) *thy People whom thou broughteſt out of* Egypt *have corrupted themſelves. I know them to be an obſtinate People in many Inſtances; therefore intercede not for them, but ſee me expreſs my Reſentments in the Deſtruction of them; and to thee will I transfer the Bleſſings I intended to them, and of thee will I make a great Nation.*

But notwithſtanding the *Iſraelites* frequent Rebellions againſt God, and tumultuous Mutinies againſt him, *Moſes* was ſo far from ſeeking his own Intereſt by their Deſtruction, that he interpoſed with his Prayers; and with his importunate Intreaties ſo appeaſed the Lord, that he deſiſted from their Deſtruction.

The pious *Moſes* having depreciated the awful Stroke of divine Vengeance haſtened down from the Mount, and took *Joſhua* with him, who had, during his Stay above, waited for him below. As they went, *Joſhua*, hearing the Noiſe of the People ſhouting, obſerved to *Moſes*, that there was a Noiſe of War in the Camp. But *Moſes*, who knew the accurſed and idolatrous Cauſe of the ſame, reply'd, That the Noiſe was not like that of thoſe which ſhouted for Victory, nor of thoſe that cried for Quarter, but of ſuch as rejoiced.

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Angel before them, to drive out the Inhabitants of the promiſed Land, that ſo he might perform the Oath, which he had ſworn to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*.

This was very afflicting News to the *Iſraelites*, who now plainly perceived, that God's withdrawing his immediate Preſence from them was the Effect of their Rebellion; upon which they mourned, and, to ſhew their Humiliation, they forbore to put on their Ornaments. But *Moſes* to humble them the more, and make them more ſenſible of their Sin, took a Tent, and pitching it without the Camp at a good Diſtance, called it the Tabernacle of the Congregation: Intimating to them by this, that the Lord was ſo highly offended with them for their Idolatry, that he had removed from them, and would no longer dwell amongſt them as he had done before: By which Means, every one that ſought the Lord was obliged to go to this Tabernacle without the Camp; and when *Moſes* went to it, as he entered in, the cloudy Pillar in which the Lord uſed to appear, deſcended and ſtood at the Door of the Tabernacle.

Theſe Tokens of the divine Wrath rendered the People more careful in obſerving the Motions of *Moſes*; and therefore when he went out of the Camp to the Tabernacle they roſe up, and ſtood every Man at his Tent Door looking after him, till he was gone in: And when they ſaw the cloudy Pillar, which they knew was a Token of God's Preſence, they all worſhipped. Here the Lord talked with *Moſes*, and permitted *Moſes* to (*p*) talk with him very familiarly; which Favour *Moſes* improved to the People's Advantage; labouring with much Importunity to reconcile God to them.

After which, the Lord having, at *Moſes*'s Requeſt, and to encourage and comfort him, ſhewn him ſo much of his Glory, as he was capable of ſeeing, being overcome with this good Man's Exceſs of Charity, he bid him prepare two new * Tables of Stone, like the former, which he had broken, and come up himſelf alone with them in the Morning to Mount *Sinai*, and I, ſaid he, will write in thoſe Tables the Words that were in the firſt.

Moſes accordingly roſe up early in the Morning, and repaired to Mount *Sinai* with the two Tables, where proſtrating himſelf before the Divine Majeſty, who appeared in the Cloud on the Top of the Mount, moſt humbly beſeeched him to pardon the Sin of his People, the Lord favourably received his Interceſſion, and promiſed to make a

(*p*) Talk. *Moſes* talking familiarly with God is accommodated to Man's Capacity, which is expreſſed, *Exod.* xxxiii. 11. to be *Face to Face*, as a Man ſpeaketh to his Friend.

* Tables of Stone. *Euſebius* in his *Præp. Evang.* l. 18. That *Moſes* firſt taught the Uſe of Letters to the *Jews*, and that the *Phœnicians* learn'd them from the *Jews*, and the *Grecians* from the *Phœnicians*. The Matter upon which Men wrote in ruder Times was different: Some on Rinds of Trees; ſome on Tiles; ſome on Tables; which laſt was chiefly in Uſe among the *Jews*.

Law

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The TABERNACLE *of* MOSES, Exod: XL 22 to 27.

Convenant with (q) his People, upon Condition they would keep his Commandments; that they would not worſhip the Gods of the *Canaanites*; that they would make no Alliances with the People of that Country; that they would have no ſtrange Gods; that they would keep the Sabbath, the Paſſover, and other Feſtivals ordained by the Law.

Moſes having continued in the Mount forty Days and forty Nights in Communion with God without Meat and Drink, returned to the People with the two Tables of the Law; But he knew not that with God's talking with him his Face had contracted a (s) Splendor. Wherefore *Aaron* and the *Iſraelites* being frighted at the Luſtre of his Countenance, durſt not approach him; which *Moſes* perceiving, he put a Veil upon his Face, and then calling the Rulers and all the People to him, he gave them in Command all that the Lord had charged him with in the Mount: and from that Time ſo long as the Luſtre laſted upon his Face, when he talked with the People he put on the Veil, but when he went in to ſpeak to the Lord he put it off.

Moſes now informed the People, that it was the Lord's Will to have a Tabernacle built; and that he had commanded him to ſpeak to them to bring in their Offerings, which were to conſiſt of Materials with which it was to be made. The Directions now given were the ſame with thoſe when *Moſes* went firſt up to the Mount; but, by reaſon of the People's Tranſgreſſion in idolizing the Calf, they were not then delivered to them. This offering was not to be exacted, but the People were to give it voluntarily; to which God ſo inclined them, that they ſoon brought in more than was requiſite, ſo that *Moſes* was obliged to cauſe Proclamation to be made to reſtrain their Liberality.

Preparations being made, the Charge was delivered to *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, two ingenious Men, and well ſkilled in Architecture and all Manner of Workmanſhip, who employed all the Men and Women, that had any Skill in curious Operations.

This Tabernacle was a Tent covered with Curtains and Skins, but much larger than the other Tents. It was divided into two Parts; the one covered, and properly called the Tabernacle; and the other open, called the Court. The cover'd Part was again divided into two other Parts; the one called the Holy of Holies, the Curtains of which were made of embroidered Linen of ſeveral Colours. There were ten Curtains, twenty-eight Cubits long, and four in Breadth, Five Curtains together made two Co-

(q) His People. God here calls the Children of *Iſrael*, *Thy People*, that is, *Moſes*'s People, for he would not yet call them His: For this Reconciliation of God's was but conditional, and in Proportion to their Obedience.

(s) *Splendor.* The Vulgar *Latin* renders *Moſes*'s Face *Cornuta*, or *horned*; from whence, it is probable, of old he was pictured with Horns on his Head. But the *Septuagint* render it much better, *glorifyed*, to which the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. alludes.

verings

verings, which being made faſt together covered all the Tabernacle. Over the reſt there were two other Coverings, the one of Goats Hair, the other of Sheep-Skins. Theſe Veils or Coverings were laid on a ſquare frame of Planks reſting on Baſes. There were forty-eight large Planks, each a Cubit and half wide, and ten Cubits high, twenty of them on each Side, and ſix at one End to the Weſtward, and one on each Corner: each Plank was borne on two Silver Baſes; they were let into one another, and held by Bars running the Length of the Planks. The Eaſt End was open, and only covered with a Curtain. The Holy of Holies was parted from the reſt of the Tabernacle by a Curtain made faſt to four Pillars, ſtanding ten Cubits from the End. The whole Length of the Tabernacle was thirty-two Cubits high, the upper Curtain hung on the North and South-ſides eight Cubits, and on the Eaſt and Weſt four Cubits.

The Court was a Spot of Ground an hundred Cubits long, and fifty in Breadth, inclos'd by twenty Columns, each of them twenty Cubits high, and ten in Breadth, covered with Silver, and ſtanding on Copper Baſes, five Cubits diſtant from each other, between which there were Curtains drawn, and faſtened with Hooks. At the Eaſt-end was an Entrance twenty Cubits wide, covered with a Curtain hanging looſe.

The Ark was in the Sanctuary; it was a ſquare Cheſt made of *Shittim*-Wood, two Cubits and a half long, and one Cubit and a half wide and deep. It was covered with Gold Plates, and had a Gold Cornice which bore the Lid. On the Sides of it were Rings, to put Poles thro' to carry it. The Covering was all of Gold, and called the Propitiatory or Mercy-ſeat. There were two Cherubims on it, which covered it with their Wings; the Tables of the Law were in the Ark, which was therefore called the Ark of the Teſtimony, or of the Covenant.

The Table was made of Cedar covered with Gold, two Cubits long, one in Breadth, and one and a half in Height. About the Edge of it was an Ornament; it ſtood on four Feet, and had wooden Bars plated with Gold to carry it on. They laid on it the Offering or Shew-bread, (which was changed every Day,) ſix Loaves at each End, with Incenſe over them. It was not lawful for any but the Prieſts to eat of that Bread.

The Candleſtick was of pure Gold, had ſeven Branches, three on each Side, and one in the Middle: Each Branch had three Knobs like Apples, and three Sockets in the Shape of half Almond-ſhells; that in the Middle had four; on each Branch was a Gold Lamb, and there were Gold Snuffers and Nippers to dreſs them.

There were two Altars, one for the Burnt-offerings, five Cubits long and wide, and three in Height, with a Sort of Seraphim at each Corner. It was hollow, covered both within and without with Braſs Plate, and open both at Top and Bottom. In the Midſt of it was a Copper-Grate, ſtanding

ing on four Feet, a Cubit and a Half high, and faſtened with Hooks and Rings. On it were burned the Wood and the Offerings. There were all Neceſſaries for that Service, as Kettles, Ladles, Tongs, Hooks and the reſt.

The Altar of the Incenſe was but one Cubit in Length and Breadth, and two Cubits high. It was plated with Gold, and had a Crown of Gold over it. The Altar was in the Sanctuary with the Ark; that of the Burnt-offering was in the Tabernacle on the North-ſide, on the Table oppoſite to it on the South-ſide. In the Court was a great Copper Baſon on a Pillar, with ſeveral Cocks for Water to run out, for waſhing the Hands of thoſe that miniſtered.

The Veſtments of the High-Prieſt were the Breaſt-Plate, the Ephod, the Robe, the Cloſe Coat, the Mitre, and the Girdle. The Ephod, the Robe, and the Cloſe Coat were of Linen, and covered the whole Body from the Neck to the Heels. Over all was a Purple Tunick, a Veſtment larger and finer wrought, which reached not ſo low, but at the Bottom of it hung Pomegranates and Bells. The Ephod conſiſted of two Bands made of Gold Thread, and of ſeveral Colours, made faſt to a Sort of Collar, which hung down before and behind on both Shoulders, and meeting, ſerved for a Girdle to the Tunick or Veſtment. On the Shoulders were two large precious Stones, which joined the fore and the hind Parts of the Ephod, on which were carved the Names of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*, ſix on each of them. The Breaſt-plate being of the ſame Workmanſhip, but double, was made faſt with Gold Chains to the Ephod. It was a ſquare Ornament, very thick, and covering the Breaſt. The Girdle was the Ephod itſelf croſſed, or ſome other Band of the ſame Matter. The Mitre was of fine Flax; it covered the Head; and on the Fore-head, was a Gold Plate, on which were carved theſe Words, THE HOLINESS OF THE LORD.

Theſe were the ſolemn Ornaments belonging to the High Prieſt; the others were only a ſimple Tunic or Veſtment, a Linen Mitre, and a Girdle. They had all Breeches of Linen and Cotton, covering their Legs and Thighs, and reaching up to the Waiſt.

The Orders being punctually obey'd, the Veſtments and other Apparatus, were ſubmitted to the Inſpection of *Moſes*, who having viewed them, and found that all was done as the Lord had commanded, praiſed God for the People's Diligence, and prayed for them. And now all Things being ready, on the firſt Day of the firſt Month, in the ſecond Year after their Departure from *Egypt*, the Tabernacle was by God's immediate Command ſet up, and all its Furniture diſpoſed in the proper Places.

This done, the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord filled it; ſo that for a while *Moſes* himſelf was not able to enter it.

This Cloud was the Signal to the People of *Iſrael*, by which they knew when to march, and when to reſt. For when the Cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, the Children of

Iſrael journied: but if the Cloud was not taken up, they journied not until it was.

CHAP. VI.

Inſtitution of the Sacrifice, and various other Ceremonies. Appointment of Aaron *and his Sons to the Prieſtly Office. Firſt Burnt-Offering. Terrible Judgment inflicted on* Nadab *and* Abihu. Shelometh's *Sons ſtoned for Blaſphemy. The* Iſraelites *are muſtered and encamped. The manner of their Diſlodgment. Quails ſent for Food to the* Iſraelites.

THE Tabernacle being ſet up, and all Things prepared, God proceeded to give Direction to *Moſes*, and by him to the People, in what Manner his Public Worſhip, under that Diſpenſation, ſhould be performed, which was by Sacrifice; and this was an Offering made to God, to acknowledge his Sovereignty over his Creatures, and to expiate Sin.

Only five Sorts of Creatures were appointed to be offered in Sacrifice, which were Oxen, Lambs, Goats, Turtles and young Doves, all which were to be Males, and without Blemiſh.

He who preſented an Offering did it at the Altar, and laid his two Hands on the Head of the Creature, and then the Throat of it was cut within the firſt Tabernacle. The Blood was received in a Baſon, and with it the Prieſt ſprinkled the Veſſels and Corners of the Altar; the reſt was ſpilt at the Foot of the Altar. The Victim was flead, cut in Pieces, and laid on the Altar, where either the Whole or ſome Part of it was burnt, according to the ſeveral Sorts of Sacrifices.

Libations likewiſe were added to the Sacrifices. All the Wine, or Flour, which were offered with the Victim, were called Effuſion, or pouring out.

There was a ſeparate Offering of fine Flour and Oil, baked on an Iron, or in a Pan. Theſe were ſprinkled with Oil and Frankincenſe added to them.

The Sacrifices were of four Sorts:

1. The Burnt-offering every Part of which was conſumed by Fire on the Altar, after waſhing the Feet and Entrails.

2. The Peace-Offering, of which only the inward Fat or Tallow was burnt on the Altar, made up with the Liver and Kidneys, and the Tails of the Lambs. The Breaſt and the right Shoulder belonged to the Prieſts, who were obliged to eat them in the Holy Place; the reſt belonged to him who offered the Sacrifice.

3. The Sacrifice for Sin, committed either wilfully or ignorantly: and in this the Prieſt took ſome of the Blood of the Victim, dipped his Finger in it, and ſprinkled ſeven Times towards the Veil of the Sanctuary. The ſame Parts of the Victim were burnt on the Altar in this as in the former Sacrifice; the reſt, if the Sacrifice was offered for the Sin of the High Prieſt, or for the People, was carried without the Camp to be burnt there, with the Skin, the Head, the Feet, and the Bowels. If it was

was for a private Perſon, the Victim was divided, as was ſaid above, between the Prieſt and the Offerer.

4. The Sacrifice of Oblation was either fine Flour, or Incenſe, or Cakes of fine Flour and Oil baked, or the firſt Fruits of new Corn. With the Things offered there were always Oil, Salt, Wine and Frankincenſe. All the Frankincenſe was caſt into the Fire; but of the other Things offered, the Prieſt took one Part, which he alſo burnt, and the reſt belonged to him.

The next principal Object of the *Jewiſh* Worſhip was their Feſtivals. The firſt of which was their Sabbath which they kept very ſtrictly, dedicating it wholly to Reſt, not doing the leaſt ſervile Work on that Day.

It began, like all other Feſtivals, on one Evening, and ended the next. The Paſſover was likewiſe a very ſolemn Feſtival. It began the Evening of the fourteenth Day of the *March* Moon. They ate none but unleavened Bread for ſeven Days, and the ſeventh Day was another great Feſtival. The firſt Day after the Paſſover they offered new Ears of Corn, and from that Day they reckoned ſeven full Weeks, or fifty Days, and that fiftieth Day was another ſolemn Feſtival, called The Harveſt Feſtival; and they offered in Thankſgiving, two Loaves of new Wheat, as the firſt Fruits of the Harveſt.

The firſt Day of the ſeventh Month which was the firſt of the Civil Year, publiſhed by Sound of Trumpet, was alſo a Feſtival. The Tenth of the ſame Month was kept the Feaſt of Expiation, and that was the Day on which the Prieſts went into the Sanctuary. They offered two Goats, one of which was a ſolemn Sacrifice for Sin.

The High Prieſt took the Blood of this, and of the Lamb killed in the Sanctuary, and ſprinkled them; the other Goat was carried not only out of the Tabernacle, but without the Camp alſo, and was therefore called *Azazel*, or the Scape-Goat.

On the fifteenth of the ſame Month began the Feaſt of Tabernacles, and laſted eight Days, being kept as a Memorial that the Children of *Iſrael* had lived in Tents. During this Feaſt they lived in Huts covered with Boughs of Trees, and ſpent thoſe Days in Mirth, holding Boughs in their Hands, with which they went round the Altar.

Every ſeventh Year was dedicated to Reſt; for in them they neither ſowed nor reaped: but the fiftieth Year, called *Jubilee*, was moſt ſolemn; for then all Eſtates alienated returned to thoſe who had ſold them, and Slaves recovered their Liberty.

The *Iſraelites* in their Eating diſtinguiſhed between clean and unclean Creatures; it was lawful for them, to eat of the firſt, but not of the laſt.

There were two Qualifications required for the reckoning of a Beaſt clean; which were, that it ſhould have a cloven Hoof, and that it ſhould chew the Cud; ſo that it was unlawful for them to eat Swine's Fleſh, becauſe they do not chew the Cud; or Rabbits and Hares, becauſe they have not cloven Feet, like the Ox, the Stag, the Sheep, but Toes joined by Skins. Among Fiſhes they were allowed to eat

eat ſuch as had Fins and Scales. All Birds of Prey were forbid them; and it was unlawful for them to eat Blood, or the Fleſh of Beaſts ſtrangled.

Of Uncleanneſs there were many Sorts among the *Iſraelites*; not only they who eat of unclean Beaſts were reckoned unclean, but alſo thoſe who touched their Carcaſſes. Leproſy was reckoned the greateſt Uncleanneſs; of the Nature and Quality of which the Prieſt was to judge, and to ſeparate the Lepers from the reſt of the People as he thought fit.

There was alſo a Leproſy which clung to Cloths and Walls, and the Garments; after which the Moveables and the Houſes became unclean. The Women were unclean after lying-in, for forty Days if they had a Son, and ſixty Days if it were a Daughter. Of theſe Uncleanneſſes, ſome Sorts were cleanſed by waſhing their Garments and Bodies; and others, as the laſt, by offering Sacrifice to cleanſe them.

The Laws relating to Matrimony were theſe. The *Iſraelites* were forbid to marry ſtrange Women. One Man might have ſeveral Wives; but the Perſons among them, with whom it was not allowed to contract Matrimony, were the Father, the Mother, the Mother-in-law, the Siſter by the Father or Mother's Side, the Son's or Daughter's Daughter, the Father's Wife's Daughter, the Father or Mother's Siſter, the Uncle, the Daughter-in-law, the Brother's Wife, the Wife's Siſter and Daughter, or Grandſon or Granddaughter.

However, it was not only lawful, but a Command, that the Brother ſhould marry the Brother's Widow, if he died without Iſſue. Adultery and other Sins of Impurity were ſeverally forbidden by the Law. In ſhort, there was a Ceremony to try whether Women were guilty of Adultery. But beſides the moral Precepts contained in the Decalogue, and more particularly explained in the Books of *Moſes*, that holy Legiſlator by God's Direction gave them Laws for the Government of their Common-wealth, which were agreeable to Reaſon and Equity. It is worthy of Obſervation, that the general Laws and Cuſtoms of the *Iſraelites* tended to promote their Good both in a ſocial and individual Senſe; and that the moſt enormous Crimes, were puniſhed in a moſt extraordinary Manner.

After ſome of theſe Directions for the Worſhip of God, *Moſes*, by the expreſs Command of God, appointed *Aaron* High-Prieſt, and his Sons, and their Offſpring, to be the Prieſtly Race. When they were ſanctified, *Moſes* robed them, anointed their Heads with Oil, and made them offer Sacrifice for Sin. The Function of the Prieſts in general was to offer Sacrifice to the Lord, only the High-Prieſt's was peculiar; for he was allowed to go once a Year into the Sanctuary on the Day of Expiation, clad in his Prieſtly Garments, to burn Incenſe there before the Ark, and ſprinkle the Blood of the Offering ſeven Times with his Finger. To the Prieſts were joined all the Tribe of *Levi*, to ſerve in the Tabernacle; to both which were

were appointed particular Allowances for their Subſiſtence. But if any of the Prieſtly Race, or of the Tribe of *Levi*, had any bodily Imperfections, they were excluded from the Function, but ſtill enjoyed the Right and Privileges of their Birth. The Obligations they lay under were theſe; They were to drink no Wine or intoxicating Liquors when they were to officiate in the Tabernacle; they were not to marry a Woman that was divorced, or had been proſtituted; they were not to be at Funerals, unleſs they were of their own Fathers, Mothers, Sons, Daughters, Brothers, and Maiden Siſters. But now let us return to the Hiſtorical Account.

Eight Days after the Conſecration of *Aaron* and his Sons, *Aaron* offered his firſt Burnt-Offering for himſelf and the People. This was ſo acceptable to God, that he gave a miraculous Teſtimony of his approving it by ſending Fire upon the Altar, which conſumed the Offering in the Sight of the People, who in loud Shouts and Acclamations expreſſed their Joy of God's ſo ſignally owning their Offering, and in Reverence they proſtrated themſelves on the Ground.

The Fire thus miraculouſly kindled, ought to have been kept continually burning; for ſo the Lord had expreſly (*t*) commanded. But *Nadab* and *Abihu*, two unhappy Sons of *Aaron* forgetful of their Duty, took their Cenſers, and putting (*u*) common Fire in them, laid Incenſe thereon, and offered (*w*) ſtrange Fire before the Lord. So flagrant an Inſult was ſeverely Puniſhed by a righteous and tremendous God, for a ſuffocating Flame darted through their Inſides, and ſtifled them, without deſtroying their Bodies or Garments.

In order to excite in the reſt of the prieſtly order an Awe of the Divine Majeſty, and deter them from Diſobedience to the Command of Heaven, *Moſes* ordered them to bring the dead Bodies of *Nadab* and *Abihu* from be-

(*t*) Commanded. See *Levit.* vi. *v.* 12, 13. This Fire which, *Levit.* ix. *v.* 24. is ſaid to come from Heaven, and to have conſumed the firſt *Burnt-Offering*, laſted till the Captivity of *Babylon.*

(*u*) Common. There were two Sorts of Fire uſed in the Tabernacle; the Holy Fire which came from Heaven, and which God had commanded to be kept always burning for the Uſe of the Altar of *Burnt-offering*; and the common or profane Fire, which was uſed to boil the Fleſh of the *Peace-Offering*; and *Sacrifice for Sin.*

(*w*) Strange Fire. Whether theſe Sons of *Aaron* had too far indulged themſelves in the Uſe of Wine, or other ſtrong Liquors which might have made them forgetful of their Duty, doth not plainly appear from the Text, *Levit.* x. 1. Yet ſome *Jewiſh* Doctors affirm it; and from the Context, *Ib. v.* 9, there is ſome Reaſon to ſuſpect it, becauſe, as ſoon as they were carried out, God charged *Aaron* and his Sons, on Pain of Death, *Not to drink Wine or ſtrong Drink*, when they were to go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation; telling them, *It ſhall be a Statute to them throughout all Generations.* And he aſſigns there the Reaſons of this ſo ſtrict Prohibition. *That ye may put a Difference between the Holy and Unholy, and between the Clean and Unclean; and that ye may teach the Children of* Iſrael *all the Statutes which the Lord hath ſpoken to them by* Moſes.

fore the Sanctuary, and carry them out of the Camp in the ſame Condition they found them. He likewiſe charged *Aaron* and his Sons not to mourn for *Nadab* and *Abihu*, in ſhaving their Heads, or rending their Clothes; but that they ſhould leave thoſe Marks of Mourning to the reſt of the People, from whom they ought to diſtinguiſh themſelves in this, as well as in other Points, in Reverence to that holy Anointing, whereby they had been conſecrated to the Lord, and ſeparated from the reſt of their Brethren. A good Inſtruction and Warning to others to beware of murmuring or extreme ſorrowing, when the Hand of God ſhould viſit in Judgment.

The next hiſtorical Matter, is another awful Proof, the Danger of incurring the Diſpleaſure of the Almighty, exemplified in the Caſe of one, whoſe Mother's Name was *Shelomith*, an *Iſraelitiſh* Woman, of the Tribe of *Dan*; but his Father was an *Egpytian*, and ſuppoſed to be a Proſelyte to *Iſrael*.

This young Man going out of his Tent, quarrelled with a Man of *Iſrael*, and fighting, the Son of *Shelomith* was worſted. Being enraged at this Diſgrace, and retaining, as may be ſuppoſed, too much of his Father's Principles, he fell a curſing and blaſphemeing the Name of the Lord. For this he was immediately apprehended, and brought before *Moſes*, who committed him to Cuſtody till the Mind of the Lord ſhould be known concerning him; for though the third Command in the Decalogue forbids the taking of God's Name in vain, yet this blaſphemous Curſing, being an Offence of an higher Nature, againſt which no poſitive Law was yet provided, *Moſes* had recourſe to the Lord for Council and Direction therein; who determined thus: *Bring forth him that hath curſed without the Camp, and let all that heard him lay their Hands upon his (x) Head, and let all the Congregation ſtone him.*

Moſes in Obedience to the Divine Command, ordered the Sentence to be put in Execution accordingly; and a Law was thereupon made, That whoſoever ſhould, from that Time, blaſpheme the Name of the Lord, whether he were an *Iſraelite*, or a Stranger, he ſhould be ſtoned to Death.

During the Time of the *Iſraelite's* Incampment in the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, the Lord appointed *Moſes* to take *Aaron*, and with him a principal Man of every Tribe, whom the Lord pitched upon by Name, and make a general Muſter of the Men fit to bear Arms. *Moſes* therefore with *Aaron*, and their Aſſiſtants, having taken an exact Account by Poll, of all the Males

(x) Head. This Way of laying Hands on the Heads of Criminals may ſeem to ariſe from ſeveral Cauſes. 1. That they were Witneſſes of the Fact, and that the Perſon condemned ſuffered juſtly; proteſting, that if he were innocent they deſired his Blood might fall on their own Heads. 2. They put their Hands on the Head of the Criminal in Token of an expiatory Sacrifice; for Idolatry, Blaſphemy, and ſuch grievous Crimes, if they were not puniſhed, they expected would attract a Guilt, not only on the Witneſs, but the whole Nation, which by the Death of the Criminal, as by a Victim, might be expiated. 3. That the Criminal, was the juſt Cauſe of his own Death.

Six,

om twenty Years old and upwards, at were able to go forth to War in rael, found the Number to be (y) x hundred and three thouſand, five undred and fifty Men, beſides the Levites.

God had expreſly exempted the Tribe of *Levi* out of this Muſter, becauſe he had deſigned them to the peculiar Service of the Tabernacle; not only to take Charge thereof, and of all the Veſſels belonging to it, but to take it down upon every Remove, and carry both the Tabernacle, and the Veſſels, and ſet it up when they pitched again.

Being thus muſtered, *Moſes* and *Aaron* by the expreſs Command of God, ordered the Incamp ment of this great Body of People in this Manner: They were diſpoſed into four Battalions, each under one general Standard, which were ſo placed that they incloſed the Tabernacle.

The Standard of the Camp of *Judah* was firſt, which conſiſted of the Tribes of *Judah*, *Iſſachar* and *Zebulun*, the Sons of *Leah*, pitched over-againſt the Tabernacle, on the Eaſt Side of it, towards the Riſing of the Sun.

On the South-ſide was the Standard of the Camp of *Reuben*, under which were the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Simeon*, the Sons of *Leah* likewiſe, and of *Gad* the Son of *Zilpah* her Maid.

On the Weſt Side was the Standard of the Camp of *Ephraim*, under which were the Tribes of (z) *Ephraim*, *Manaſſeh*, and *Benjamin*.

And on the North Side was the Standard of the Camp of *Dan*, under which were the Tribes of *Dan* and *Naphtali*, the Sons of *Bilhah*, *Rachel*'s Maid, and of *Aſher* the Son of *Zilpah*.

(a) Between the four great (b) Camps and the Tabernacle were pitched four leſs Camps, conſiſting of the

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(y) Six, &c. By this we may ſee how much this People were increaſed in Number in about a Year's Time, and notwithſtanding they had been in a travelling Condition, and engaged in Battle with the *Amalekites*, had loſt about Three thouſand Men upon the Account of their Calf. For they were computed to be but about Six hundred thouſand Men, including the Tribe of *Levi* with them, when they came out of *Egypt*. And now they were 603,550 Men, beſides the Tribe of *Levi*, which being numbered by itſelf yielded 22,000 Males of a Month old and upwards.

(z) *Ephraim*. *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* ſupplied the Place of *Joſeph* their Father; and therefore they are taken to be *Rachel*'s Children, and ſo they and *Benjamin* make the third Standard.

(a) Between. *Joſephus* in *Antiq.* l. 3. c. 11. tells us, That between each Tribe in every one of theſe four Quarters there were diſtant Spaces, like Streets, where they bought and ſold as in a Market, and Tradeſmen in their Shops, in Manner of a City leading to and fro. This Camp is thought to be round, a Mile diſtant from the Tabernacle, that is, a Sabbath-Day's Journey, where the Diſtance between the People and the Ark is commanded to be Two thouſand Cubits.

(b) Camps. Each of theſe Camps, had its ſeveral Banner or Standard, and each Standard its Motto or Inſcription. Each Standard likewiſe had a diſtinct Sign written on it: *Reuben*'s Standard had the Image of a Man, *Judah*'s of a Lion, *Ephraim*'s of an Ox, and *Dan*'s that of an Eagle. Theſe ſame four Creatures are uſed by *Ezekiel* to deſcribe the Nature of Angels. Every *Cherubim* is ſaid to have four Faces; the Face of a Man, to ſhew his Underſtanding; of a Lion, to ſhew his Power; of an Ox, to ſhew his Miniſtratory Office; of an Eagle, to ſhew his Swiftneſs in the Execution of God's Will. By the

Prieſts and *Levites*, near to the Tabernacle, in and about which their Service lay.

On the Eaſt Side incamped *Moſes* and *Aaron*, with *Aaron*'s Sons, who had the Charge of the Sanctuary.

On the South Side were the *Kohathites*, a Part of the *Levites* deſcended from *Kohath* the ſecond Son of *Levi*.

On the Weſt Side, behind the Tabernacle, ſtood the *Gerſhonites*, another Part of the *Levites*, deſcended from *Gerſhan*, *Levi*'s eldeſt Son.

And on the North Side were planted the *Merarites*, the remaining Part of the *Levites*, who ſprung from *Merari*, *Levi*'s youngeſt Son.

This was the Order of their incamping. The Manner of their diſlodging and marching was thus: When they were to remove (which was when the Cloud was taken off the Tabernacle) the Trumpet was ſounded, and upon the firſt Alarm the Standard of *Judah* being raiſed, the three Tribes which belonged to it ſet forward. Then the Tabernacle being taken down, the *Gerſhonites* and the *Merarites* attended the Waggons, with the Boards and Staves of it. When theſe were on their March, a ſecond Alarm was ſounded; upon which the Standard of *Reuben*'s Camp advanced, with the Tribes under it.

After them followed the *Kohathites*, bearing the Sanctuary, which being more holy, and leſs cumberſome than the heavy Boards and Pillars of the Tabernacle, was not put into a Waggon, but carried on their Shoulders.

Next followed the Standard of *Ephraim*'s Camp, with the three Tribes belonging to it. And laſt of all, the other three Tribes under the Standard of *Dan* brought up the Rear.

(c) Having remained a conſiderable Time before the Mount of the Lord, the *Iſraelites* decamped by God's Command on the firſt Day of the ſecond Month, the ſecond Year after their

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the ſame four, in the Opinion of many of the Fathers, are ſhadowed the four Evangeliſts: The Man ſhadoweth St. *Matthew*, becauſe he begins his Goſpel with the Generation of Chriſt according to his Humanity; the Lion, St. *Mark*, becauſe he begins his Goſpel from that Voice of the Lion roaring in the Wilderneſs; the Ox, St. *Luke*, becauſe he begins with *Zacharias* the Prieſt; and the Eagle, St. *John*, who, ſoaring aloft, beginneth with the Divinity of Chriſt.

(*c*) Having, &c. Deſigning in the Text to keep chiefly to the Hiſtorical Part of the Sacred Writ, and to preſerve the Connection of Matter of Fact, with which the Preceptive would interfere, I thought it more uſeful for the Reader to continue the Series of the Story in the Text, and put the intervening Precepts, and Orders here in the Notes. In the third and fourth Chapters of *Numbers*, therefore, we have the Lord's taking the *Levites* to himſelf in Exchange for the Firſt-born, with the Reaſon for his ſo doing; likewiſe his giving the *Levites* to the *Prieſts* for the Service of the Tabernacle, diſtributing them into three Claſſes or Orders, and appointing them their ſeveral Services. Afterwards, in Chap. v. follows that clear and excellent Type of Goſpel Purity, and Chriſtian Church-Diſcipline, expreſſed in commanding the Children of *Iſrael* to put out of the Camp every Leper, and every one that had a running Iſſue, and whoſoever was defiled with the Dead, both Male and Female; that they might not defile their Camps in the midſt of which the Lord dwelled. In the ſixth Chapter followed divers Laws relating to Reſtitution in Caſes of Treſpaſs, and to the Trial of Jealouſy between Men and their Wives; to

coming out of *Egypt*. In their March the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord went before them, to ſearch out a reſting Place for them: at the ſetting forward of which *Moſes* ſaid, *Riſe Lord, and let thine Enemies be ſcattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.* And when the Ark reſted again, he added, *return O Lord unto the many thouſands of* Iſrael. Having marched three Days into the Wilderneſs, they came to a Place called, *The Graves of Luſt*, from what happened to the *Iſraelites* there. Murmuring againſt the Lord, and complaining of the Wearineſs of their Journey, he was ſo incenſed againſt them, that he ſent down Fire, and deſtroyed thoſe that were in the extream Parts of the Camp. Frighted at this Judgment, they repaired to *Moſes*, upon whoſe Interceſſion the Fire was quenched, and the Name of that Place called *Taberah*, which ſignifies Burning This Exertion of Divine Power, inſtead of terrifying them into their Duty, did but increaſe their Murmuring. For being come to new Quarters, they expected Change of Diet; and becauſe God did not preſently gratify them, they in Contempt preferred the rank Food of *Egypt*, Onions, Leeks, and Garlick, to the delicious heavenly Dainties with which God had daily fed them. *Moſes* had often heard their Murmuring, and patiently borne with them; but now that they were grown ſo numerous, and the greatneſs of their Numbers demanding ſtill more Care and Vigilance to govern and provide for them, the Senſe of the Weight ſo great a Charge occaſioned, gave much Uneaſineſs to *Moſes*, who in his Addreſs to God, complained of the heavy Burden which the Care of ſo numerous and mutinous a People brought upon him.

The Almighty no ſooner heard the Complaint of his faithful Servant, then he relieved him from his Cares, bidding him chuſe ſeventy Men of the Elders of *Iſrael*, and bring them with him to the Tabernacle of the Congregation. *And there*, ſaid the Lord, *I will come down, and talk with thee; and I will endue them with the ſame Spirit with which I have inſpired thee, and they ſhall bear the Burden of the People with thee.* *Moſes* accordingly brought the ſeventy Elders of the Children of *Iſrael* before the Lord, who kept his Word with him; for being inſpired, they ſtraightway propheſied. Nay, this Inſpiration was ſo extenſive, that two of thoſe ſeventy, though they came not out with the reſt to the Tabernacle, but remained behind in the Camp, were taken in among the reſt, and received the ſame Impreſſion of the Spirit, and propheſied as the others did. This ſo ſurprized a cer-

to the Vow of *Nazarites*, to which is ſubjoined the Form of that Divine Bleſſing which the Lord himſelf did dictate for the Prieſts to pronounce upon the People. The ſeventh Chapter contains the Offerings of the Princes at the Dedication of both the Tabernacle and the Altar, *&c.* The Conſecration and Purification of the *Levites* are ſet down in the eighth. A Reinforcement of the Paſſover, and the guiding of the *Iſraelites* by the Cloud in the ninth Chapter.

tain young Man, that he ran from the Camp to the Tabernacle to acquaint *Moſes* that *Eldad* and *Medad*, for ſo they were named, were propheſying in the Camp.

Joſhua, who as yet was not acquainted with the Operations of the Lord by his Spirit, over-hearing this Meſſage, and thinking it ſome Derogation from his Maſter, that they ſhould propheſy, and not follow him, adviſed *Moſes* to forbid them. But *Moſes* reproving him gently for his Raſhneſs, cry'd, *Doſt thou envy them upon my Account? Would to God all the Lord's People were inſpired, and that they might propheſy.*

Amidſt divers Complaints of *Moſes* to God of his Incapacity, to ſuſtain the heavy Weight of ſo great a Charge, as the Direction of ſo numerous a People, he expoſtulated with the Lord on the Impoſſibility of their being ſupplied with Fleſh in that Place, becauſe they were ſo numerous. The Lord knowing the great Fatigue *Moſes* had gone thro' in the Conduct of this People, bore with him, and only gave him this gentle Rebuke: *Is the Lord's Hand ſhortened? Thou ſhalt ſee whether my Word ſhall come to paſs unto thee, or not.*

Accordingly, when *Moſes* with the Elders were gone back to the Camp, and had acquainted the People with it, a South Wind aroſe, and drove vaſt Numbers of (*d*) Quails from the Sea-Coaſt within a Mile of the Camp, where they lay about a Yard thick upon the Ground. The People fell greedily to gathering the Quails, which they (ſtill diſtruſting God's Providence, which had hitherto never failed them) did in ſuch great Quantities, as if they were to have no more.

But God ſoon call'd them to a dreadful Account for their inſolent Demand of Fleſh, and doubtful Diſtruſt of his Power: For while they were regaling themſelves with theſe Dainties, God viſited them with a very ſevere (*e*) Plague whereof many died, and were buried in the Place, which from their luſting after Fleſh was called *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, which ſignifies the Graves of Luſt or Concupiſcence.

CHAP.

(*d*) Quails. Theſe Birds muſt be ſuppoſed to come from the *Abraian* or *Red Sea*; and as *Paran* and *Kibroth-Hattaavah* were North and North-Eaſt of the *Red-ſea*, it muſt be a Southerly Wind. That theſe Quails came from the *Red Sea* is the Opinion of *Joſephus*, *Pliny* and ſeveral others, who affirm them to breed on the Coaſts there.

(*e*) Plague. It probably ſeems to have been a ſuffocating Diſtemper, like the Quinſey which choaked them as they were eating or ſoon after; for the Words are very expreſs, *While the Meat was in their Mouth, the Wrath of God fell upon them.* This is further confirmed by *Pſalm* lxxviii. *v.* 30, 31.

Ethiopian.

CHAP. VII.

Aaron *and his Sister* Miriam *enviously seek to raise a sedition; the latter is punished with Leprosy, and having been made a general Example to the People is healed. Appointment of the Spies, with their particular Acts. The People are threatened for murmuring at them. God averts the Judgment, but punishes those who spread a false Report. Sabbath breaking punished with Death. The Rebellion and Punishment of* Korah. *The Plague appeased.*

FROM hence they took their Journey to *Hazeroth*, which signifies Palaces. And here another unhappy Accident befel them: *Aaron* and his Sister *Miriam* observing the great Power of *Moses* their Brother with the People, and that God chiefly made Use of him in the Delivery of his sacred Oracles to them, began to envy him: To give some Colour to their Quarrel, they pretended to fall out with him upon the Account of his marrying a Foreigner, calling her *(f) Ethiopian*, and emulating *Moses*'s great Gifts and Authority, they added, *What, hath the Lord spoken only by* Moses *? Hath he not spoken also by us? Moses* saw their Discontent; and tho' he was naturally of a meek Disposition, and could pardon an Injury offered to himself, his righteous Soul was grieved and incensed, when Mortals dared to insult the Majesty of Heaven; but looking on this as a personal Pique, he would not take Notice of it.

However, God, who was more immediately concerned in this, resolved to vindicate himself and his faithful Servant; for on a sudden calling for *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*, at the Door of the Tabernacle he sharply reprehended them for their Insolence, asking them, How they durst speak against his Servant *Moses?* (g) *You share*, said he, *the great prophetick Office indeed, and to you I have declared my Will in Dreams and Visions; but with* Moses *I have conversed more familiarly, and I will speak Face to Face with him, and shew him as much of my Glory as he is capable of seeing.*

Upon this the Lord withdrew in great Displeasure from them. *Moses* had the Comfort of seeing himself justified: But *Aaron*, to his great Confusion, saw his Sister *Miriam* made a dreadful Example of God's Anger; for on a sudden she became a loathsome deform'd Leper; and well knowing he deserved to share in this Curse for his ungrateful Murmuring, presently addressed himself to *Moses*, acknowledged their Sin, begged Pardon, and inter-

(f) *Ethiopian.* *Zipporah*, *Moses*'s Wife, was a *Midianite*; and because *Midian* border'd on *Ethiopia*, she was so called, and it is sometimes in holy Scripture comprehended under this Name. But here *Zipporah* is called *Ethiopian* in Ridicule and Spight; which they ought not to have done, for she having submitted to the Law, ought to have been reckoned an *Israelite*, as *Ruth* and *Rahab* were.

(g) You. *Miriam* is called a Prophetess.

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ceded for his Siſter, that ſhe might be reſtored to her Health.

Good *Moſes*, who was never wanting in Charity even to his Enemies, melted into Pity, and complied with his Requeſt. But yet, to terrify others from moving Sedition again, and becauſe the Offence was publick, God reſolved to make an Example of *Miriam* in her Cure, and therefore he commanded *Moſes* to turn her out of the Camp, as a common Leper, for ſeven Days, and then to receive her again.

Miriam being returned to the Camp, the *Iſraelites* removed to the Deſert of *Paran*; from whence after ſeveral Incampments, they came to *Kadeſh-Barnea*, on the Frontiers of *Canaan*.

Here *Moſes* let them know that they were come near the promiſed Land; and for their Satisfaction, God commanded *Moſes* to ſend twelve Men, one of each Tribe, to take a View of the Country. He charged them to go up to the Hills to obſerve whether the Country was ſtrong or weak; whether there were many Inhabitants; how their Towns were ſituated, and whether fortified; whether the Soil was fertile or barren; whether it was planted with Trees or not; what Fruit they bore, and to bring ſome of it; for then was the Time when the firſt Grapes were ripe, that was, in *July*.

With theſe Inſtructions the twelve Spies ſet forward; and having taken a View of the Country from North to South, in their Return, they paſſed through a fertile Valley which abounded in Vines, where they cut down a Branch with but one Cluſter of Grapes on it, but that of ſo vaſt a Weight and Bigneſs, that they were forced to carry it upon a Staff between two.

Nor was this the only Product of this happy Soil; the Golden Fig, and beautiful Pomegranate, adorned the Trees, and Variety of Fruits loaded the luxuriant Branches. Of each of theſe they took a Sample; and upon their leaving the Place, from the great Plenty of Grapes, they called it the Valley of *Eſchol*, which ſignifies a Cluſter of Grapes.

Having ſpent forty Days in viewing and obſerving the Country, they returned to the Camp of *Iſrael* and *Kadiſh*; and having ſhewed the Fruits of the Land to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and the whole Congregation, they related the Obſervations they had made in their Journey, and ſaid, *We have been in the Country to which you have ſent us. It is a fertile and plentiful Land; but the Inhabitants of it are powerful. There are great Cities with ſtrong Walls. We have ſeen there Men of the Race of* Anak, *warlike Men, and of a gigantick Stature. The* Amalekites *inhabit the South Part of the Land; the* Hittites, Jebuſites, *and* Amorites, *on the Mountains; and the* Canaanites, *on the Sea-coaſts, and the River* Jordan.

Such a Relation could not but terrify a People poſſeſſed with Suſpicions and Diſcontent; and they ſoon diſcovered their Fear. But *Caleb*, one of thoſe that were ſent to diſcover the Country, to pacify them, ſaid, *Let us make ourſelves Maſters of the Country, for we are ſtrong enough to conquer thoſe People.*

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ACTS *of the* SPIES, Numbers XIII, 23.

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But the Mutineers declared againſt engaging in a War, wiſhing they were in *Egypt* again; and chooſing rather to die in the Wilderneſs, than to fall by the Sword, and have their Wives and Children enſlaved. In ſhort, they propoſed to chooſe themſelves a Chief, and return to *Egypt*.

This ſo deeply affected *Moſes*, that notwithſtanding they were ſo obſtinately bent upon their own Ruin, he and *Aaron*, in the Preſence of the Aſſembly, fell on their Faces to deprecate the Vengeance which they feared God would let fly at theſe rebellious Mutineers. Whilſt *Caleb* and *Joſhua* thro' Exceſs of Sorrow for the People's Blaſphemy, rending their Cloaths, boldly ſtood up, and endeavoured to perſuade them that they might, by God's Help overcome the Inhabitants of that Country; they ſaid, *The Land that we paſſed thro' is indeed a rich and fertile Land, abounding with all Things neceſſary for Life. If we pleaſe the Lord, he will bring us into this Land, and give it us.*

Do not therefore, by rebelling againſt him, forfeit his Promiſe and Protection. Nor be afraid of the People of the Land, whom we ſhall as ſurely conquer as we eat our Food, and as eaſily; for their God hath withdrawn his Care of them; and if the Lord continue it to you, ye have nothing to fear.

This Speech made ſo little Impreſſion upon them, that in a tumultuous manner, they called out to ſtone them; and which they had probably done, had not God miraculouſly interpoſed, by ſending his Glory, which viſibly appeared at that Inſtant in the Tabernacle of the Congregation before them all.

While the People were thus contemning the Power of the Moſt High, *Moſes* and *Aaron* at humble Diſtance proſtrated themſelves before the Lord, and God being highly incenſed with this Inſolence of the *Iſraelites*, told *Moſes* he would ſend the Plague that ſhould extirpate this People, and would make him Prince of a more numerous and powerful Nation. But good *Moſes*, as he had before done, preferred the Intereſt of an unworthy People, and the Honour of God, to all ſelfiſh Views, repreſenting to the Lord, that if he deſtroy'd the *Iſraelites* the *Egyptians*, and other Nations thereabout, who ſaw he had taken them into his Protection, would not fail to ſay He was not able to carry them into the Land he had promiſed them. Then imploring God's Mercy, and with repeated and importunate Intreaties begging Pardon for the People, God at length ſuffered himſelf to be prevailed on, and to ſatisfy *Moſes*, he pronounced them pardoned; but it was with this Reſtriction; for reproaching them with their Ingratitude, who had ſo often and wonderfully taſted of his Bounty in providing againſt their Wants, ſcreening them from their Enemies, and preſerving them in all Dangers; ſince they had ſo often provoked him with their Diſobedience, he declared that not one of thoſe who had murmured ſhould enter into the promiſed Land, except *Caleb* and *Joſhua*; and they ſhould wander about there with their Children for the Space of forty Years. And though God at the preſſing Intreaty of

Moſes did reverſe the Sentence of ſudden Death upon the whole Congregation of Murmurers, yet the ten falſe Spies, the immediate Authors of the Rebellion, who had brought an evil Report upon the good Land, were puniſhed with Death, by the Plague.

But *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, who had done their Duty, in giving a faithful Account of their Obſervations, were not only preſerved, but commended of God, who gave them his Promiſe that they ſhould live to enter, and take Poſſeſſion of the good Land.

On the firſt Report of theſe Things, the Children of *Iſrael* are ſaid to have mourned greatly. But by their Actions it doth not appear they were any better diſpoſed; for changing their Minds on a ſudden, from a cowardly Fearfulneſs, to a preſumptuous Raſhneſs, the next Morning they declared, *We are ready to go to the Place whereof the Lord hath ſpoken to us.*

But this was undertaken in their rebellious, obſtinate Temper, and was adding Sin to Sin. Nor was *Moſes* ignorant of it; for he endeavoured to reſtrain them, and expoſtulated with them on the Danger, telling them their Enterprize was againſt the expreſs Command of God, that it would not proſper, and forbid them going upon Pain of being defeated and ſlain, aſſuring them, that God had left them, and that the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites* had gained the Paſſes in the Mountains before them.

Theſe Admonitions had no Weight with thoſe obſtinate People. They preſumptuouſly ſuppoſed the Boldneſs of the Attempt would wipe off their former Cowardice, and reinſtate them in God's Favour; and tho' the Ark of the Lord, which was to go before the Hoſt, went not with them, nor *Moſes* their General at the Head of them, yet they reſolutely marched to the Top of the Hills, where the Enemy ſurprized, defeated, and ſlew many of them, and purſued the reſt as far as *Horma*.

After this, though it was but eleven Days Journey from *Horeb* to *Kadiſh-Barnea*; yet thro their Diſobedience, they ſpent near two Years in going that eleven Days Journey. And which is ſtill more ſtrange, turning back from *Kadiſh-Barnea*, and being near the Confines of the promiſed Land, they were eight and thirty Years more wandering in the Wilderneſs, before they could come to the Borders of the promiſed Land again.

Moſes having led them back into the Deſart, toward the *Red Sea*, they continued thereabout, making in the aforeſaid Time, eighteen ſeveral Removes or Diſlodgments, and at laſt they returned to *Kadiſh-Barnea*, near the Place from whence they went.

Many Circumſtances worthy of Notice happened to the *Iſraelites* during their Continuance in the Wilderneſs.

The firſt of which is of a Man, who by a poſt-fact Law, was adjudged to be ſtoned to Death for violating the Sabbath, by gathering Sticks on that Day, the Celebration of which God had ſtrictly injoined, though there was no Penalty annexed to the Breach of it, thoſe

thoſe who brought the Offender before *Moſes*, he knew would determine juſtly; and committed the Man to ſafe Cuſtody, *Moſes* enquired of God what he ſhould do in this Caſe? Who immediately, from his heavenly Oracle, returned this Anſwer, *That the Criminal ſhould be conveyed without the Camp and there be ſtoned to Death.* Which was executed accordingly.

The *Iſraelites* now increaſed in Wickedneſs and Impiety, and vexed the Souls of the few pious among them, the haughty *Korah*, great Grandſon of *Levi*, ſeparated from *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and having ſeduced *Dathan* and *Abiram*, Sons of *Eliab*, of *Reuben*'s Family, and drawn in two hundred and fifty *Levites* to his Party, that were Men of Fame and Intereſt among the People, he made moſt grievous Complaint againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, charging them with Pride, in uſurping upon the Liberties of the People, who, they ſaid, were as holy as themſelves.

Moſes on hearing this, *(k)* fell on his Face; and ſoon after riſing from that humble Poſture, he, with great Courage and Aſſurance, let them know, that the next Day the Lord would decide the Controverſy, and would make it appear, Who were his Servants, and who was holy, and would admit whom he had choſen to come near him.

Then, with his uſual Calmneſs and Serenity of Mind, he argued the Matter with them, mildly rebuked their Inſolence, and told them that they took too much upon themſelves.

But in a more particular Manner he addreſſed himſelf to *Korah*, and the *Levites* that joined him, ſaid, *Hear me, ye Sons of* Levi; *Is it a Matter of ſo light Concern, that the God of* Iſrael *hath diſtinguiſhed you from the reſt of* Iſrael, *to admit you to the more immediate Service of the Tabernacle, and to ſtand before the Congregation, and miniſter to them? Is not this an Honour ſufficient to ſatisfy your ambitious Spirit, but that ye muſt aim at the Prieſthood too?*

This is the Cauſe of your Clamours; and for this ye have moved the People to Sedition. But be aſſured, whatever ye may pretend againſt Aaron, *this Inſult is againſt the Lord, as it is againſt his Diſpenſations, that ye murmur and conſpire.*

Dathan and *Abiram* ſtood at a Diſtance, while *Moſes* talked with the reſt, and therefore he ſent for them to come to him; but they ſurlily returned for an Anſwer, That they would not come. And to retort his own Expreſ-

(*k*) Fell, &c. This is a Phraſe often uſed to expreſs Divine Adoration and Application to God for Help; and good Reaſon there is to believe that at this Time *Moſes*, who was well acquainted with the gracious and ready Aſſiſtance of God in time of Need, might apply himſelf to the Lord or Protection againſt this mutinous Crew, as apprehending ſome Violence from them, who in this tumultuous Manner attacked him. And it is very reaſonable to think that, whilſt he lay in this humble Poſture, God appeared to him, and both comforted and adviſed him; for preſently after he ſpoke to the Rebels with great Aſſurance and, to vindicate himſelf, put the Matter between him and them upon Trial the next Day.

ſions

ſions upon himſelf, they added, *Is it a Matter of ſo ſmall Moment, that thou haſt brought us out of a Land that flowed with Plenty, to kill us in the Deſart?*

Thou affecteſt Dominion, and wouldſt make thyſelf Prince of us alſo. Notwithſtanding thy fair Promiſes, thou haſt not brought us into a Land that floweth with Milk and Honey, nor given us Inheritance of Fields and Vineyards; but when we were ready to take Poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land, thou haſt turned us back into this barren Deſart, to repeat the Fatigues and Hardſhip, we had before undergone. We will not come.

Theſe unjuſt Reproaches highly provoked *Moſes*, who inſtead of returning any ill Language to them, addreſſing himſelf to God, ſaid, *Reſpect not thou their Offering; for tho' they reflect thus unjuſtly upon me, I have not taken ſo much as an Aſs from them, neither have I hurt one of them.* Then ſummoning *Korah* and all his Company to meet him and *Aaron* before the Lord next Day, he ordered them to bring their Cenſers ready prepared with Incenſe in them, and to appear all before the Lord.

Accordingly, on the Morrow, they came with great Confidence: and having ſet Fire to the Incenſe in their Cenſers, they boldly planted themſelves in the Door of the Tabernacle with *Moſes* and *Aaron*; and to bid the greater Defiance to theſe holy Men, they had purſuaded all the Congregation to ſide with them.

This impious and preſumptuous Behaviour ſo provoked the Almighty, that he reſolved to take the Matter into his own Hand; and darting forth his Glory upon the Tabernacle, he commanded *Moſes* and *Aaron* to withdraw, that he might conſume the Rebels. But the two good Men, knowing that the People were drawn into this Inſolence by the wicked Arts of *Korah*, and his Party, proſtrated themſelves before the Lord, and by their Prayers interceded for the People; *O God, thou God of the Spirits of all Fleſh*, ſaid they, *ſhall one Man ſin; and wilt thou be angry with all?* Their Prayers were heard as ſoon as delivered, and God bid them command the People to withdraw, who frightened with the amazing Splendor that broke from the Cloud, readily took the Warning, and drew off from the Tents of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, who came boldly out, and ſtood daring at the Doors of their Tents, with their Wives and Families. Then *Moſes* addreſſing himſelf to the People, ſaid, *By this you ſhall know that the Lord has commiſſioned me to do what I have done, and that I have undertaken nothing of my own Head. If theſe Men die the common Way of Nature, or be viſited as other Men, then take it for granted, the Lord hath not ſent me; but if he deal with them after a ſtrange and unuſual Manner, and the Earth, opening her Mouth, ſwallow them up alive, then ſhall ye underſtand that theſe Men have provoked the Lord.*

Moſes had no ſooner ſpoken theſe Words, but terrible Convulſions heaved the labouring Earth, the Surface of which cleaving aſunder, *Korah* and his Faction

Faction, with their Goods and (*l*) Families, were ſwallowed up alive, and the Ground cloſing upon them they periſhed.

The reſt of the People that ſtood round them, and ſaw their diſmal Fate, being frighted with the loud Cries and Shrieks of the departing Mutineers, fled away for fear the Earth ſhould have ſwallowed them too.

In the mean Time God, to compleat his Vengeance on the reſt of the Leaders in this Rebellion, who had profanely attempted to offer Incenſe contrary to the Law, ſent down Fire from Heaven, and deſtroyed the two hundred and fifty Men that had joined with *Korah*. The (*m*) Cenſers, on which they intended to offer, remained amidſt the congregation, which God had ordered to be preſerved, but not for the ſame Uſe as formerly, nor in the ſame Form; therefore he commanded *Moſes* to direct *Eleazer*, *Aaron*'s Son, to beat them out into ſmall Plates, and fix them to the Altar of the Burnt-Offerings; aſſigning this Reaſon for it, *That it might be for a Memorial to the Children of* Iſrael, *that no Stranger, or any that was not of* Aaron's *Family, ſhould preſume to offer Incenſe before the Lord, leſt he died the Death of* Korah *and his Company.*

This Judgment ſevere as it was had no other Effect on the *Iſraelites* than the former, for the next Day they took Occaſion to mutiny afreſh, murmuring againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and charging them with the Murder of ſo many Perſons. They well knowing the unruly Nature of this obſtinate People, and fearing to what Degree of Madneſs and Violence they might have proceeded, took (*n*) Sanctuary in the Tabernacle; where as ſoon as they had entered, the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord appeared, which was a ſure Token that the Lord had ſomething to ſay to them.

Immediately God called to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and bid them be gone from the reſt of the Congregation; for he would conſume them in a Moment. They thereupon fell down, as they uſed to do on ſuch Occaſions, to intercede for the People; but, as early as they were in ſupplicating, Vengeance was before them; for the Lord,

(*l*) Families. Except ſome of *Korah*'s Sons. See *Numb.* xxvi. 11.

(*m*) Cenſers. The two hundred and fifty Princes had not offered any Incenſe, being prevented by Death: However, it may be preſumed that they had lighted their Incenſe at the holy Fire; by which they obtained (at leaſt in the Opinion of the People) a ſort of Conſecration. The Lord therefore, to keep up among them the Reputation and Eſteem of Things devoted, would not have them put to profane Uſes: And to make a Difference between his own Inſtitutions and Men's Contrivances (eſpecially thoſe of wicked Men) he ordered all thoſe Brazen Cenſers to be wrought into Broad Plates, and to cover the Altar with them; to the Intent that theſe Brazen Plates being poliſhed bright might by their Luſtre put the People in mind of the Offence of thoſe that were once the Owners of them; and by ſeeing them often (as they muſt do every Time they looked upon the Altar) they might be warned of the ſame Crime.

(*n*) Sanctuary. This ſhews to whom we ought to fly in any Perſecution or Diſtreſs; and that God is our only Refuge and Protection. Whence the great Fruit and Advantage of Perſecution appears, that it compels us to apply to him.

provoked by their repeated Rebellions, had already ſent a (*o*) Plague among them. Which *Moſes* perceivng, bid *Aaron* take a Cenſer, and put Fire in it from the Altar, and Incenſe; and haſten to the Congregation to make an Atonement for them. *Aaron* did as *Moſes* directed him, and ſtanding between the dead and the living, he prayed for the People, and the Plague ceaſed.

However, in that ſhort Space of Time that the Plague raged amongſt them, there died fourteen thouſand, ſeven hundred Men, without reckoning thoſe who periſhed in the Sedition with *Korah* and his Company.

CHAP. VIII.

God cauſes Aaron's *Rod to bud, and to be left as a Monument to the People, in order to prevent their future Murmuring.* Moſes *ſupplies the People with Water out of the Rock. Death of* Aaron. *The Plague of fiery Serpents. Remedied by looking up to the Brazen one ſet up by* Moſes. *The* Iſraelites *obtain Victory over ſeveral Princes, who endeavoured to oppoſe their March.*

GOD having in ſo dreadful a manner declared againſt thoſe who oppoſed the Government of *Moſes*, and the Prieſthood of *Aaron*, to end all Conteſts and Diſputes among the Ambitious and Aſpiring, reſolved by a convincing Miracle to put an End to the Controverſy, and eſtabliſh and confirm the Prieſthood in the Family in which he had placed it.

In order to this, he commanded *Moſes* to take a Rod from each Tribe, and to write upon it the Name of the Prince of that Tribe to which it belonged; and on the Rod of the Tribe of *Levi* to write *Aaron*'s Name; which when he had done, he was to lay up theſe twelve Rods in the Tabernacle, before the Ark of the Teſtimony, where God was to declare his Will farther to them. And to let them know that God would determine the Controverſy, and put an End to their Murmurings, he would cauſe the Rod of that Man to bloſſom whom he would chooſe.

Moſes, who never failed immediate Compliance with the divine Command, took a Rod from the Prince of each Tribe, wrote his Name upon it, and laid up all the Rods together in the Tabernacle. And the next Day he went in and brought forth all the Rods, and in the Preſence of all the People he gave each Man his Rod, which they found to be the ſame as they had delivered to *Moſes* over Night, except *Aaron*'s, which had not only budded, but bloſſomed, and bore ripe Almonds. This was a convincing Proof, that God had ſingled out *Aaron* to the Prieſtly Office.

(*o*) Plague. Plague is a comprehenſive Term, as we ſee in the Plagues of *Egypt*, which are all called Plagues, tho' they were all different from each other. We may reaſonably think that it was the Peſtilence or infectious Sickneſs.

Several

To preſerve the Memory therefore of the Determination of this Controverſy, the Lord bid *Moſes* bring *Aaron*'s Rod back again, and lay it before the Ark of the Tabernacle, to be kept for a Memorial of their Rebellion: and that ſeeing it they might forbear to murmur; and ſo prevent ſudden Death.

Theſe obſtinate People now began to be ſenſible of the Juſtice of their Puniſhment; and ſince God in his own Houſe viſited them for their Sins, they enumerated the (*p*) ſeveral Ways they had been puniſhed.

Behold, ſaid they, we die; we periſh; we are all loſt; and becauſe God had in the Tabernacle expreſſed his Diſpleaſure more than once in puniſhing them in an exemplary Manner, they cried out, If we approach the Tabernacle we die; not conſidering, that their own Iniquities drew the Juſtice of God upon them in this Place, for which he had ordered the Altar to be covered with (*q*) remarkable ſhining Braſs, to put them in Mind of their Obedience.

(*r*) The next hiſtorical Matter we meet with is the *Iſraelites* being at *Kadiſh*; where *Miriam* (who was Siſter to *Aaron* and *Moſes*, and (*s*) elder than both) died, and was buried there. In this Place the *Iſraelites*, impatient of any Inconveniency for Want of Water, began (as uſually) to exclaim againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, ſaying, *Why have ye brought the Lord's People into the Wilderneſs to kill them and their Cattle? Why did you perſuade us to leave the fertile Land of* Egypt *to bring us into this barren Place, which affords neither Water to quench our Thirſt, nor Fruits to ſatisfy our Hunger? Would to God we had periſhed with our Brethren before the Lord.*

The Servants of God according to their uſual Cuſtom addreſſed themſelves to God for Help; who bid *Moſes* take the Rod, and that he and *Aaron* ſhould aſſemble the People; and then, ſaid the Lord, *Speak ye to the Rock in their*

(*p*) Several. The *Chaldee* Text deſcribing their Murmuring thus: We die by the Sword; as in the Caſe of their daring to enter the promiſed Land contrary to *Moſes*'s Advice, when they were ſlain by the *Canaanites* and *Amalekites*. The Earth ſwallowed us up as in the Caſe of *Korah* and his Aſſociates. The Peſtilence doth conſume us; as in the Caſe of the 1470 that died of it.

(*q*) Remarkable. As being made of the Brazen Cenſers, which, belonged to the Two hundred and fifty Princes that had joined *Korah*.

(*r*) The next, &c. The Hiſtory breaks off at the ſeventeenth Chapter of *Numbers*, and begins not again till the twentieth.

By the Interpoſition of theſe Matters in theſe two Chapters, we miſs the Account how the *Iſraelites* came to *Kadeſh* again in the Wilderneſs of *Zin*; Only *Moſes* briefly reciting ſome of their Faults, tell us, That after they had been beated by the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites*, they turn'd and took their Way in the Wilderneſs along the *Red Sea*, as God had commanded *Moſes*, and compaſſed *Mount Seir* many Days; (which both *Tremellius* and our Bible in their Notes reckon eight and thirty Years) till at length the Lord ſaid, *Ye have compaſſed this Mountain long enough, turn ye North-ward.*

(*s*) Elder. That ſhe was elder than *Moſes*, appears from *Exod.* ii. 4, where ſhe is ſaid to be left to watch him when he was expoſed in the Ark ofRuſhes.

Rod,

Sight, and it ſhall yield Water for them.

Moſes hereupon taking the *(t)* Rod from before the Lord went, and with *Aaron*'s Aſſiſtance aſſembled the People together before the Lord. *Moſes* hitherto had paid an exact and abſolute Obedience to all the Commands God had enjoined him; but now, in deviating from his Inſtructions, tho' ſeemingly but a little, he committed the greateſt Miſcarriage of his whole Life; for he was bid to ſpeak to the Rock before the People; but inſtead of doing it, he ſpeaks to the People, ſaying, *Hear now, ye Rebels! muſt we fetch Water for you out of the Rock?* In which he not only expreſſed Impatience and Heat of Spirit, but Incredulity, making a Doubt of what God had poſitively promiſed.

It is certain he diſobeyed God in this; for he *(u)* ſmote the Rock twice with the Rod, and immediately there iſſued out Water in great Plenty; by which we may ſee, God would not loſe the Honour of his Miracle for his Servant's Fault, but cauſed the Water to flow from the Rock. But to ſhew he expected an entire Obedience to his Commands, tho' *Moſes* had been his faithful Servant in performing all his Inſtructions before; yet now, for the Breach of his Diſobedience, he denounces to *Moſes* and *Aaron* (who was in the ſame Tranſgreſſion with him) their Doom in theſe Words; *Becauſe ye believed me not, to* (w) *ſanctify me in the Sight of the Children of* Iſrael, *therefore you ſhall not have the Honour of* (x) *leading the People into the Land which I have given them.* From this unhappy Accident, the Place was called *Meribath*, which ſignifies, The Water of Contradiction.

Moſes patiently received the Divine Chaſtiſement, but continued in his Command and Care of the People, and intending to decamp, that he might ſecure their March from *Kadiſh*, he ſent an Embaſſy to the King of *Edom*, (upon whoſe Borders they now were)

(t) Rod. The Text does not expreſly tell us, whether of the Rods this was; that with which he did ſo many Miracles in *Egypt* formerly, or that by which they were ſo lately reclaimed from a Rebellion: It ſeems moſt likely to be the latter; becauſe it is called *the Rod from before the Lord*, and which yet bore a Miracle upon it, the Buds and Almonds.

(u) Smote. If it ſhould be alledg'd in Favour of *Moſes*, That when he was ſent to the Rock before, he was bid to take his Rod in his Hand, and ſmite the Rock, that the Water might come forth; and that from thence he might infer, he was alſo now to ſmite the Rock with his Rod: It may be ſaid, That as he then followed his Inſtruction, ſo he was to have done here. He ſmote the Rock then, becauſe he was bid; but he did not ſpeak to it, becauſe he was not bid: So now he ſhould have ſpoken to it, becauſe he was bid; and not have ſmitten it, becauſe he was not bid.

(w) Sanctify. That is, you ſhould ſhew them that I am holy, omnipotent, merciful and true; and that I can and will perform my Promiſe to this wicked and ungrateful People, as ye know, and ought to remember I have often done.

(x) This was a ſore Mortification to *Moſes* not to ſee the promiſed *Canaan*, being thereby fruſtrated of the Fruit of his long and troubleſome Conduct. By which we ought to learn to die to the World and ourſelves, and live only to God,

Hormah.

to inform him of the Travels of the *Iſraelites* deſiring Leave to paſs thro' his Country, on Account that they were both deſcended from *Iſaac* and *Rebecca*; aſſuring him that they would commit no Acts of Hoſtility, nor treſpaſs in his Fields or Vineyards, nor ſo much as drink of his Water, without paying for it, but only travel on the King's Highway. The inhoſpitable *Edomite* not only refuſed them Paſſage, but with a potent Army came out to defend his Frontiers; and oppoſe the *Iſraelites*, ſhould they attempt to paſs.

They therefore turn'd another Way, and marching from *Kadeſh* came to Mount *Hor*, near the Borders of *Edom*. And now the Time drawing near, that the Children of *Iſrael* were to enter the promiſed Land, into which the Lord had told *Aaron* he ſhould not enter, becauſe of his Tranſgreſſion at *Meribah*, God gave *Aaron* Notice of his approaching Death, and commanded *Moſes* to take *Aaron* and *Eleazer*, his Son, who was to ſucceed him in the Office of High-Prieſt, to the Mount, there to ſtrip *Aaron* of his Prieſtly Garments, and put them upon *Eleazer* his Son; Which when *Moſes* had done, *Aaron* died on the Top of Mount *Hor*, being a hundred twenty and three Years old: and when the People ſaw that *Aaron* was dead, they bewailed him thirty Days.

It was the Beginning of the fifth Month of the fortieth Year of their Travels from *Egypt*, when they were upon the Borders of *Canaan*; and *Arad*, one of the Kings of *Canaan*, that dwelt in the South, hearing which Way they came, went out and fought them, and took ſome of them Priſoners. This Defeat brought them to a Senſe of their Duty; and knowing they were now upon the Borders of the promiſed Land, they made a Vow to the Lord, promiſing that if he would deliver this People into their Hands, they would utterly deſtroy their Cities. God took them at their Word, and gave them ſuch Succeſs, that at (*y*) *Horman* they engaged theſe *Canaanites*, and defeated them, took their Cities, and utterly deſtroyed them.

Elated with this Succeſs, they diſlodged from Mount *Hor*, and took their way by the *Red-Sea*, marching round *Edom*, thro' which they had been denied Paſſage, and forbidden to force their Way. And becauſe the Way was long, the Paſſes uneaſy, and the Country barren; they, forgetting their late Succeſs, and reflecting only on the preſent Diſcouragements, relapſed into their old Humour of murmuring, complaining directly againſt God and *Moſes*: *Wherefore*, ſay they, *have ye brought us up out of* Egypt, *to die in the Wilderneſs, where there is neither Meat, nor Drink, but this* (*b*) Manna, *which our Stomachs loathe.* To puniſh this repeated Inſtance of Impiety and Diſtruſt of his Care, God

(*y*) *Hormah.* This ſeems to be the ſame Place to which the *Amalekites* had beaten and chaſed the *Iſraelites* about eight and thirty Years before.

(*b*) Manna. This is the ſame Complaint which they made before.

ſent (*c*) fiery Serpents among them, which deſtroyed a great Number of theſe Rebels. This Puniſhment brought the reſt to their Senſes, who flying to injured Moſes, acknowledged their Guilt, and cryed for Mercy: *Moſes* though he had lately incurred the Diſpleaſure of the Lord on their Account, in Pity to their Diſtreſs, addreſſed himſelf in Prayer to God for them; who did not immediately take away the Serpents, but leaving them to be a farther Scourge, and make them more ſenſible of their Tranſgreſſion, provided a Remedy to prevent their Death, and heal their Hurts: For he order'd *Moſes* to made a (*d*) Serpent of a fiery Colour, and to ſet it up on a high Pole, that the People, who were bitten by the fiery Serpents, might, by looking up to it, be recovered.

Moſes accordingly made the Form of a Serpent in Braſs, and ſet it up as a Banner; and whoever afterwards was bitten by a Serpent, if he looked upon that Brazen Serpent, recovered.

The *Iſraelites* at this Time were at *Phanon*, whither they were come from *Salmona*, their firſt Camp, after they removed from about Mount *Hor*. From *Phanan*, they went and incamped at *Oboth*, and thence to *Jiearbarim*, in the Deſert that is before *Moab* to the Eaſtward.

Decamping from thence they came to *Zared*, and afterwards incamped by the River of *Arnon*, which is in the Deſert, and runs to the Frontiers of the *Amorites*; for it divides them from the *Moabites*. They held on their March, and at length came into the Plains of *Moab*, on the Banks of *Jordan*, oppoſite to *Jericho*, to the Top of *Piſgah*.

From hence *Moſes* ſent Ambaſſadors to *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, to demand a Paſſage through his Country, promiſing not to break into the Fields or Vineyards, nor to drink of the Water, but only to march along the Highway, till they were paſt his Country.

The *Amorite* Prince, fearing to admit ſo formidable a Body into the Heart of his Kingdom, poſitively denied them Paſſage: And thinking it better Policy to attack than be attacked, gathering what Force he could, marched out to give them Battle at *Jahaz*, where *Iſrael* routed him, and ſeized his Country. They likewiſe took *Heſhbon*, and the Villages about it, which *Sihon* had before taken from the *Moabites*; and being thus poſſeſſed of the *Amorites* Land, they dwelt there.

After this, *Moſes* ſent out Forces to diſcover *Jazar*, another City of the *Amorites*, which they took with all its Territories, and drove out the People

(*c*) Fiery. Theſe Serpents were not ſo by Nature, but by the Effect of their Biting which cauſed a great inflamation, or Burning, in all thoſe that were bitten by them.

(*d*) Serpent. This *Brazen Serpent* (a ſignificant Type of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who being lifted up as an *Enſign for the Nations*, gives Life and Salvation to all them, that in true Faith look up to him) remained among the *Jews* above 700 Years, to the Time of *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*; who in a holy Zeal, purſuant to God's Command, removing the high Places, breaking the Images, and cutting down the Groves broke alſo in Pieces this *Brazen Serpent* among the reſt.

Giant

that dwelt there. Then turning another Way, they marched towards *Baſhan*, where the (*e*) Giant *Og*, another *Amorite* King, reigned.

This powerful Prince, with his Gigantick Troops, drew out to give the *Iſraelites* Battle; but leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged at the Sight of this formidable Army, who exceeded the common Size of Nature, *Moſes* by the command of God, bid them fear nothing, for he had delivered them into their Hands, and they ſhould make as eaſy a Conqueſt over them, as they did over *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*.

Iſrael thus encouraged joined Battle, and ſlew King *Og* and his Sons, and all his People. They alſo took all his Cities threeſcore in Number, all fenced with high Walls, Gates and Bars, beſides open Towns and Villages a great Number; deſtroying utterly the Inhabitants, but keeping all the Cattle and the Spoil of thoſe Cities for a Prey to themſelves, as they had done before in the (*f*) Caſe of *Sihon*, the other *Amorite* King.

(*e*) Giant. The Deſcription of this Gigantick King, who was the laſt of the Race of the Giants, whoſe Stature we may gueſs at by the Size of his Bed, which being made of Iron for Strength, was nine Cubits in Length, and four Cubits in Breadth after the Cubit of a Man, which being the common Cubit, containing half a Yard, or one Foot and a half of *Engliſh* Meaſure, if reduced to Yards or Feet, will make four Yards and a half, or thirteen Feet and a half for the Length, and, two Yards, or ſix Feet, for the Breadth of the Bed.

(*f*) Caſe. So they were commanded, where the *Social Laws*, or Laws of War and Heraldry are ſet down: By which they were required upon their Approach to any City, to offer Peace firſt which if the Inhabitants excepted, and ſurrendered to them, they ſhould only make them Tributaries. But if they refuſed Peace, and put them to beſiege and ſtorm the Place, they ſhould, when they had taken it, put all the Men to the Sword; but might keep the Women and Children with the Cattle and other Spoil for themſelves.

CHAP. IX.

Balak *King of* Moab *fears the Inroads of the* Iſraelites. *Send Meſſengers to* Balaam *to perſuade him to curſe them.* Balaam's *Mercenary Conduct remarkably chaſtiſed.* Balak's *Sacrifice.* Balaam's *Parable.* Balaam *prophecies the Succeſs of the* Iſraelites. *They are drawn by the* Moabites *into Whoredom and Idolatry. They are ſeverely puniſhed for their Sins.*

ENCOURAGED with theſe Succeſſes the *Iſraelites* march'd to the Plains of *Moab*, and incamped on this Side *Jordan* by *Jerico*. The Approach of theſe victorious Strangers ſtruck a Terror wherever they came, and the Fame of their late Succeſs againſt the *Amorites* put the King of *Moab* and his People into a terrible (*g*) Conſternation. *Balak* the King knowing himſelf too weak to engage the mighty Force of *Iſrael*, adviſed with the Chiefs

(*g*) Conſternation. If the *Moabites* had known the Protection they were under, they needed not to have been afraid, for if they would have been quiet they were particularly exempted from the Sword of *Iſrael*.

Midian

of (*h*) *Midian*, to whom he propoſed the common Danger of theſe Invaders: The Reſult of their Conſultation was this; King *Balak* ſhould ſend Meſſengers to (*i*) *Balaam*, the Son of *Beor*, who lived at *Pethor*, a City in *Meſopotamia*, to invite and bribe him to curſe the *Iſraelites*; for they had ſo great an Opinion of his Skill and Power in Divination, that they thought he could curſe or bleſs as he pleaſed. By general Conſent therefore they deputed a ſelect Number of their chief Men with Preſents to invite him to go with them to *Balak*. When they came to him, and delivered their Meſſage from the King, he deſired them to tarry with him that Night, for he could give them no Anſwer till he had conſulted the Lord.

But that omniſcient Being, to whom the Secrets of all Hearts are known, could not be ignorant of *Balaam*'s baſe Motive; in order therefore to try in what manner he would endeavour to palliate the ſame, asked him, *What Men they were, that were with him? They are ſome*, ſaid he, *whom the King of* Moab *hath ſent to me, to let me know, that there is a People come out of* Egypt, *which cover the Face of the Earth; and to deſire me to come to him, and curſe them, in hopes that he then may be able to overcome them, and drive them away*. But God ſaid to him, *Thou ſhalt not go with them, nor curſe that People, for they are bleſſed.*

Balaam, not daring to diſobey the Command of the Lord, got up in the Morning, and diſmiſſing the Meſſengers, ſaid, *Be gone to your own Country; for the Lord refuſeth to give me Leave to go with you.* They returned to the King, but miſreported *Balaam*'s Anſwer; for inſtead of telling him, that God had refuſed to let him come, they told him, that *Balaam* refuſed to come. Whereupon *Balak* falſly ſuggeſting to himſelf, that either the Number and Quality of his Meſſengers did not anſwer *Balaam*'s Ambition, or the Value of the Preſents his Covetouſneſs, reſolved to gratify both; and therefore he immediately diſpatched away Meſſengers of more honourable Rank, and with larger Propoſals. *Let nothing*, ſaid he, *hinder thee from coming to me; for I will promote thee to very great Honour, and give thee whatſoever thou wilt ask, if thou wilt come and curſe this People.*

Such was the Prevalence of *Balaam's* Avarice, that though he had been ſo ſolemnly prohibited from going and curſing the People, whom God had bleſſed; he accepted of theſe Preſents of their Enemies, and afterwards evaded Compliance with their Requeſt, by aſſuring them he durſt not, on any Account, counteract the Divine Will, but to amuſe them, deſired they would tarry a little

(*h*) Midian. The *Midianites* were Neighbours and Confederates with the *Moabites*, therefore *Balak* repreſented to them the Danger, and asked their Advice and Aſſiſtance.

(*i*) *Balaam*. Several Fathers repreſent *Balaam* as a Wizard, and Prophet of the Devil; but by the free Acceſs he had to God, particularly *Numb.* xxiv. 13. and xxii. 18. he was not a Prophet of the Devil; tho' it is plain from the Holy Text he was covetous, and St. *Peter*, *Epiſt.* 2. *Ch.* ii. *v.* 15, ſays, *He loved the Wages of Unrighteouſneſs.*

Own

BALAAM *and the* ANGEL, Numbs. XXII. 23.

while he enquired farther of the Lord.

This was tempting God; who therefore in Diſpleaſure left him to his (k) own Will. He had poſitively at firſt told him his Mind, and it was the higheſt Diſobedience and Preſumption to pretend or offer at the reverſing of it, by a farther Application. However, blinded with Covetouſneſs and Pride, he again addreſſed himſelf to God; who provoked at his Obſtinacy leaves him to himſelf, and tells him, *If the Men come to call thee,* (l) *riſe and go with them; but what I ſhall ſay to thee, that only ſhalt thou do.*

Notwithſtanding this Permiſſion to go, God was reſolved to make *Balaam* ſenſible of his Diſpleaſure. Upon this Conceſſion he got up in the Morning, and went with the Prince of *Moab*. But as he was on the Road, the Angel of the Lord ſtood on the Way with a drawn Sword in his Hand.

A Regard to the divine Omnipreſence was almoſt baniſhed in the Mind of *Balaam*, by the longing Deſire after the Reward of his Impiety; but it pleaſed God to give the Aſs, on which *Balaam* rode, ſuch Quickneſs of Sight, that ſhe both ſaw the Angel and ſhun'd him, by turning out of the Road into the Field. *Balaam* for this beat the Aſs, and ſtruggling to put the Beaſt into the Way, the Angel ſtood in another narrow Way between two Walls, which incloſed ſome Vineyards. The Aſs ſeeing the Angel, clung up to the Wall, and cruſh'd *Balaam*'s Foot. This ſo incenſed him, that he beat her again. But when the Angel went farther, and ſtood in a narrow Place, where the Aſs could not turn, ſhe fell down under him. For this *Balaam* was in a greater Paſſion than before, beating her with his Staff.

But God, to rebuke the Wilfulneſs of the Prophet, miraculouſly open'd the Mouth of the Aſs, and ſhe ſaid to him, *What have I done to thee, that thou ſhould'ſt beat me theſe three Times. Becauſe,* ſaid he, *thou haſt deſerved it, in mocking me: had I a Sword in my Hand I would kill thee.* The Aſs reply'd, *Am I not thine Aſs, upon which thou haſt been uſed to ride, ever ſince I was thine; did I ever ſerve thee ſo before?* He anſwered, *No.* Such an Incident might have alarmed a Mind leſs prepoſeſſed than that of *Balaam*, which remained blinded, till God himſelf opened his Eyes, and let him ſee the Angel ſtanding in the Way with his Sword drawn in his Hand; at the Sight of which he bowed himſelf down, and fell on his Face. The Angel expoſtulated with him, and told him his Undertaking was perverſe, in attempting to

(k) Own Will. From hence we may obſerve how unfit we are to chooſe for ourſelves; eſpecially in Oppoſition to God's immediate Commands and Inſtructions.

(l) Riſe, &c. This by the Conſent of Interpreters is looked upon, not as a Command but a Permiſſion; and ſeems ironically ſpoken; as if God had ſaid, "Since thou art ſo eager to go, thou knoweſt it is againſt my Mind, take thy own courſe; Go if thou wilt. But yet thou ſhalt not gain thy End; thou ſhalt go with this Reſtriction on thy Will, Thou ſhalt ſay nothing but what I ſhall direct thee."

go againſt the expreſs Command of God, and that therefore he was come to ſtop him: and, but for his Aſs, which he had ſo barbarouſly abuſed, he had ſlain him.

Balaam ſelf-convicted, acknowledged his Crime, and as if he had not remembered God's poſitive Injunction, that he ſhould not go, if it ſo pleaſed God. However, the Lord reſolved out of this Man's wicked Inclination to raiſe ſome Advantage; and therefore, ſince he was gone ſo far, he would not ſend him back, but make him, who was hired to curſe, be the Inſtrument of pronouncing a Bleſſing on his People.

Having thus chaſtiſed *Balaam* on the Way, he ſuffered him to go on; but with this Charge, that he ſhould only ſpeak what God ſhould tell him.

Balaam then went on his Journey with the Prince of *Moab*; and when *Balak* underſtood that *Balaam* was coming, that he might the more oblige him by perſonal Civilities, he came out to meet him (himſelf receiving him upon the Confines of his Dominion.) At their Meeting, the King in a friendly Manner blamed *Balaam* for refuſing to come to him upon his firſt ſending, ſince it was in his Power to advance him. But *Balaam*, to excuſe himſelf, let him know what Reſtraint the Lord had laid upon him. Then entertaining him publickly with his Princes and great Men that Day, the next Day he brought him up into the (*m*) High Places of (*n*) *Baal*, that from thence he might take a View of the Camp of *Iſrael*.

Whilſt they were here, the Prophet directed the King to order (*o*) ſeven Altars to be erected for him: and ſeven Oxen, with ſeven Rams, to be prepared. Which being done, they both together offered an Ox and a Ram upon each Altar. Then leaving *Balak* to ſtand by his Burnt-offering, *Balaam* withdrew to conſult the Lord, who met and inſtructed him what to ſay; and returned to *Balak*, whom he found ſtanding at the Altar, and the Princes of *Moab* with him, he thus addreſſed himſelf to them: *Thou haſt cauſed me, O King, to come from* (p) *Aram, out of the Mountains of the Eaſt to curſe the Family of* Jacob, *and bid Defiance to* Iſrael. *But how ſhall I curſe thoſe whom God hath not curſed? and how ſhall I defy thoſe whom the Lord hath not defied? From the Top of the Rocks I ſee their Protector, and from the Hills I behold him. Behold, this People ſhall be ſeparated to God, and diſtinguiſhed from all other People in*

(*m*) High Places. The Scripture calls *High*, thoſe Eminences and Groves which the idolatrous Nations conſecrated to their Gods, and where they in a brutiſh and laſcivious Manner, ſolac'd themſelves.

(*n*) Baal. As to the Word *Baal*, it is ſometimes a proper Name (as here in this Place) ſometimes it is the common Name of Idols:

(*o*) Seven. The Number *Seven* was eſteemed ſacred among the *Iſraeli es* (from whom probably *Balaam* might have learnt it) where the Prieſt is ſaid to ſprinkle the Blood of the Bullock ſeven Times before the Veil of the Sanctuary.

(*p*) *Aram*. The ſame as *Meſopotamia*, which the *Hebrews* call *Aram Nabaraim*.

He

Religion, Laws, and Courſe of Life: they ſhall not be reckoned among the Nations. Then ſetting forth the Proſperity and Increaſe of *Iſrael*,, he wiſhed that his Lot might be with them in Life and Death.

Balak as much alarmed as incenſed at the Prophecy of *Balaam*, ſo contrary to his Expectation, paſſionately enquired, *What haſt thou done? I ſent for thee to curſe mine Enemies, and thou haſt bleſſed them.* *Balaam* excuſed himſelf by the Neceſſity of his Inſtructions, from which at this Time it was not in his Power to deviate.

However, as *Balak* was not diſcouraged; from the Change of the Place he hoped a Change of Fortune, or better Succeſs; and therefore taking *Balaam* into the Field of *Zophim* to the Top of *Piſgah*, he tried whether he could curſe from thence.

Balaam, who was willing to pleaſe him, had ſeven Altars there, and a Bullock and a Ram offered on each. Then withdrawing again, as before, to conſult the Lord, he received freſh Inſtructions. *Balak* now began to underſtand the Interview between the Lord and *Balaam*; and upon his Return to him and his Attendants, who were big with Expectation of the Reſult, demanded what the Lord had ſpoken? Upon which *Balaam*, to beſpeak the greater Attention and Regard to what he ſhould ſay, began thus. *Conſider, O* Balak, *thou Son of* Zippor, *conſider, that God, who hath already bleſſed* Iſrael, *and forbidden me to curſe them, is not like a Man, that he ſhould renounce his Promiſe, or repent of what he does. Hath he promiſed, and ſhall he not perform? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good? Behold, I have received Commiſſion to bleſs, and he hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it.* (r)

He does not approve of Afflictions or Outrages againſt the Poſterity of Jacob, *nor of Vexation or Trouble againſt the Poſterity of* Iſrael. *The Lord his God is with him, and the* (s) *Shout of a King is in him. God hath brought him out of* Egypt *: He hath, as it were, the Strength of a* (t) *Unicorn.*

Surely no Enchantment can prevail againſt Jacob, *nor any Divination againſt* Iſrael. *So that conſidering what God ſhall work this Time for the Deliverance of his People, all the World ſhall wonder and ſay, What hath God wrought! Who hath put his People out of the Reach of Fraud or Force, and turned the intended Curſe into a Bleſſing.*

And to ſhew their future Strength and Succeſs, the People ſhall riſe up as a great Lion, and liſt up themſelves as a young Lion: They ſhall not lie down until they eat of the Prey, and drink of the Blood of the ſlain.

Balak was ſo incenſed at this pe-

(r) He does &c. The Text ſhould be rendered, *He does not approve of Afflictions or Outrages againſt the Poſterity of* Jacob, *nor Vexation or Trouble againſt the Poſterity of* Iſrael. This is very agreeable to all that *Balaam* ſaid and did on this Occaſion, and ſtops the Mouths of *Libertines* and *Enthuſiaſts*.

(s) Shout. So *Jerome*, *Arius Montanus*, *Tremelius*, and *Junius* turn it. That is, the Triumph of a King victorious over his Enemies.

(t) Unicorn. This Animal (generally ſuppoſed to be the *Rhinoceros*) is frequently uſed to expreſs extraordinary Strength.

Di-

remptory Prophecy of the immediate Interpoſition of Providence in Favour of God's choſen People; that he forbid *Balaam* to exerciſe his prophetic Talent; tho' ſoon after his Eagerneſs to have *Iſrael* curſed, made him change his Mind; for he called for *Balaam*, and intreated him to try another Place, in hopes God would permit him to curſe *Iſrael*. Hereupon *Balaam* followed *Balak* to the Top of Mount *Peor*, a Hill that looked towards the Wilderneſs.

Whatſoever Ground *Balak* might have for his Hopes, it's certain *Balaam* knew the poſitive Will of God in this Caſe was to bleſs and not to curſe; and this he had declared to be irreverſible, when he told *Balak* God was not like fickle Man. Yet ſtimulated with the blind Deſire of Reward, he conſented to *Balak* to tempt the Lord afreſh; for he there erected ſeven Altars, and laid ſeven Sacrifices thereon.

But having in vain tried all his Arts of (*u*) Divination, and ſeeing that God was reſolved to continue bleſſing *Iſrael* (without withdrawing, as before, under Pretence to conſult the Lord) looking on the Camp of *Iſrael*, the (*w*) Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he cried out in an Extaſy, *How good are thy Tents, O* Jacob, *and thy Tabernacles O* Iſrael! Then by ſignificant Metaphors, he foretold the Extent, Fertility, and Strength of *Iſrael*; and thoſe that bleſſed them ſhould be bleſſed, and thoſe that curſed them ſhould be curſed.

Balak now upbraided *Balaam* with Deceit and Falſhood, and (*x*) ſmiting his Hands together, being no longer able to reſtrain his Rage, bid him haſte and be gone; *For I thought*, ſaid he, *to have promoted thee to great Honour, if thou hadſt anſwered my Deſign in curſing* Iſrael, *but the Lord hath hindered thy Preferment.*

Balaam had Recourſe to his old Excuſe, that he could not exceed the Commands of the Lord, but muſt ſpeak what he put in his Mouth. And tho' he was willing to gratify the King of *Moab* in ſome Sort, and perhaps (conſidering his covetous Temper) to intitle himſelf to ſome Reward, he offered to advertiſe them now at parting, what the *Iſraelites* ſhould do to his People in the latter Days. But ſtill againſt his own Inclination, he beſtow'd Bleſſings on *Iſrael*, and propheſied, a Star ſhould come forth from *Jacob*, and a Rod from *Iſrael*; that it ſhould ſmite the Chiefs of *Moab*, and deſtroy the Children of *Seth*; that *Edom* ſhould fall under its Power; and that the *Amalekites* and *Kenites* ſhould be extirpated. In fine, he foretold, that the Weſtern Nations, the *Greeks* and *Romans*, ſhould vanquiſh the *Aſſyrians*, deſtroy the *Hebrews*, and periſh themſelves.

(*u*) Divination. See *Numb.* xxiv. 1.

(*w*) Spirit. In *Numb.* xxiii. it is obſervable, that while *Balaam* us'd his Art of Divination or Inchantment, he had only a Word put into his Mouth; but now having laid aſide his Inchantments, the Spirit of God came upon him.

(*x*) Smiting, &c. This was a great Token of Diſpleaſure, as ſmiting the Breaſt was of Sorrow.

Shittim

But the monſtrous Wickedneſs of this Man is further apparent, for after theſe Predictions, as if vexed at his own Diſappointment in miſſing the Reward he expected, and to be revenged on the *Iſraelites* as the Occaſion of it, he inſtructed the *Moabites* and *Midianites* in a wicked Artifice; which was to ſend their Daughters to the Camp of the *Iſraelites*, to draw thoſe People into Idolatry; the ſure Method to deprive them of the Aſſiſtance of God, who protected them. This Artifice ſucceeded; for the next Account we have of the *Iſraelites* is, that they lay incamp'd at *a*) at *Shittim*; where many of them were deluded by the *Moabitiſh* and *Midianitiſh* Women, and were drawn in, not only to commit Whoredom with them, but to aſſiſt at their Sacrifices, and worſhip their Gods, even (*b*) *Baal Peor*.

But God who hated Sin in his choſen People, ſuffered not their Iniquity to go unpuniſhed; for he ſhewed terrible Reſentment againſt both their atrocious Crimes, commanding *Moſes* to take the Chiefs of thoſe that had joined themſelves to *Baal-Peor*, and hang them up before the Lord in the Sight of all the People.

Moſes accordingly gave Charge to the (*c*) Judges of *Iſrael* to ſee Execution done, every one on the Men under his Charge, that ſacrificed to *Baal-Peor*. But the divine Juſtice did not ſtop here. Their Whoredom muſt be puniſhed as well as their Idolatry; which was aggravated vaſtly by a Perſon of conſiderable Rank and Dignity.

Bold *Zimri*, the Son of *Salu*, Prince of a chief Houſe among the *Simeonites*, took *Cozbi*, the Daughter of *Zur*, who was alſo a Prince of a Chief Houſe in *Midian*, and daringly brought her to the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp, in Contempt of *Moſes*, and in Sight of the Congregation, who, becauſe of the late Execution done upon their Princes, ſtood weeping before the Door of the Tabernacle; and leading her openly into his Tent, there lay with her.

This ſuperlative Impudence and open Violation of God's Law, none offered to reſent, but *Phinehas*, *Aaron*'s Grandſon, who riſing up from the Congregation, and filled with a divine Zeal, took a Javelin in his Hand, and followed them to the Tent; where in the very Act of Whoredom, he thruſt them both through.

This zealous Act of *Phinehas* put a Stop to the Plague, which God ſent among the People for this audacious Act of *Zimri*'s, and the other Lewdneſſes and Impieties of his Comrades. However, there died on this Occaſion no leſs than (*d*) four and twenty thouſand. *Phinehas*'s holy Zeal for God's

(*a*) Shittim. Which ſignifies, *Turning aſide*.

(*b*) *Baal-Peor*. Suppoſed to be the beaſtly *Priapus*.

(*c*) Judges. Probably theſe were the Judges whom, by the Advice of his father-in Law *Jethro*, with God's Approbation, he had ſet over the People.

(*d*) Four, &c. In this Number, it is probable, *Moſes* does include the Thouſand Princes that were hanged. Which Computation reconciles this Place to that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* x. 8. where he mentions but three and twenty thouſand, without the thouſand Princes that were hanged.

Honour, gained him not only high Commendation, but a perpetual Settlement of the Prieſthood on himſelf and his Poſterity.

CHAP. X.

The Iſraelites *overcome the* Midianites *without ſuſtaining the leaſt Loſs. They are numbered, and the different Tribes put in Poſſeſſion of their reſpective Departments.* Moſes *appriſed of his Death, aſſembles the People, and having enumerated the peculiar Bleſſings of the Almighty, and enjoined on them future Obedience, recited to them a Song, compoſed at the immediate Direction of God. Appoints* Joſhua *his Succeſſor and dies.*

THESE Diſorders thus quieted, and the Offenders puniſhed, the next Thing was to take Vengeance of the *(e) Midianites*, who had debauched the *Iſraelites* with their Idolatry and Whoredoms. In order to this, *Moſes* commanded a Detachment of twelve Thouſand ſelect Men, a Thouſand out of every Tribe, to go againſt the *Midianites*; among whom went the zealous *Phinehas*, who carried with him the holy Inſtruments, or Trumpets, to animate the People.

Such was the Exertion of the divine Power in Behalf of the *Iſraelites*, that tho' very inferior in Number, they ſlew five Kings, and all their Men; among whom was the wicked Prophet *(g) Balaam*, who though he had before eſcaped the Angel's Sword, yet now fell a Sacrifice to the injured People of God.

They burned all the Cities and Caſtles, took all the Women and Children Priſoners, and ſeized on their Cattle, Flocks and Goods. After which, loaded with the Spoils of their Enemies, they returned in Triumph to the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp.

In the Way Home they were met by *Moſes*, *Eleazer* the High Prieſt, and all the Princes; who congratulated their Succeſs. But *Moſes* ſeeing the *Midianitiſh* Women among the Captives, was much offended at the Officers of the Army for ſaving them; for theſe, ſaid he, by the Counſel of *Balaam*, cauſed the *Iſraelites* to ſin againſt the Lord in the Buſineſs of *Peor*, and provoked him to ſend a Plague upon the Congregation of *Iſrael*. And thereupon he commanded them to kill every Male among the Children, and every Woman that had lain with Man; and to ſave none alive but the Virgin Females.

After this they were to abide ſeven Days without the Camp, and both Soldiers and Spoils paſs thro' the Ceremonies of a legal Purification: Which when they had performed, God directed *Moſes* to take an Account of the whole Prey; and dividing it into two equal Parts, to give one to the Soldiers

(e) *Midianites.* They inhabited the Country on the Eaſt towards the Red-Sea.

(g) *Balaam.* By this it ſeems he was not got home; and it may be, with Reaſon, conjectured, that he was deviſing much the ſame Miſchief againſt the *Hebrews*, whilſt he was among the *Midianites*, as when he was among the *Moabites*; and therefore he juſtly fell by the Sword of *Iſrael*.

who had taken it, and the other part among the reſt of the People that ſtayed at Home. Out of the Soldier's Part he levied the five hundredth Part, both of Perſons and Beaſts, which he paid as a Tribute to *Eleazer* the Prieſt, for a Heave-Offering to the Lord; and out of the other Part, which the People had, one Part out of fifty of both Perſons and Beaſts, was given to the *Levites*.

The Officers of the Army out of the other Parts of the Booty, which they had taken, as Jewels of Gold, Bracelets, Rings, Ear-rings and Tablets, brought their expiatory Offering to atone for their Tranſgreſſions in ſaving the *Midianitiſh* Women, and their gratulatory Offering of Thankſgiving for ſo great a Victory; the Greatneſs of which may be gueſſed from the Number of their Priſoners and Cattle; the Virgin Females were two and thirty Thouſand; all the reſt of the People, Men, Women and Children, were put to the Sword.

The Plunder in Cattle and Flocks, conſiſted of ſix hundred ſeventy and five Thouſand Sheep, ſeventy and two Thouſand Beeves, and ſixty one Thouſand Aſſes; beſides rich Goods and Ornaments; and to make this ſtill more great and miraculous, the Victory was gained without the Loſs of one Man on *Iſrael*'s Side, as appears from the Report the Officers made upon a Muſter.

The *Iſraelites* thus taking Poſſeſſion of the Country, on this Side *Jordan*, the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, obſerving it to be a fertile Soil, and good Paſturage, deſired of *Moſes* that they might ſettle in that Country, upon Condition that they ſhould march with the other Tribes to conquer the Land where they were to ſettle; that they would not return till the others were in Poſſeſſion; and that they would claim no Part of the Lands that were beyond *Jordan*.

Moſes, at firſt, thought they intended to venture no farther, but had a Mind to ſit down in a country ready gained, and leave their Brethren, the reſt of the Tribes. Upon which he blamed them for offering by ſuch a Propoſal to diſcourage the reſt of the *Iſraelites*; but when he underſtood their real Deſign, upon Condition they performed their Promiſe, he granted their Requeſt.

Moſes then enumerated the ſeveral Stations and Removes, which the Children of *Iſrael* made from *Rameſes* in *Egypt*, to the River *Jordan* in *Canaan*, and deſcribed the Bounds of the Promiſed Land, and gave the Names of the Perſons appointed to divide it among the Tribes of *Iſrael*.

Orders were afterwards given, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould aſſign to the *Levites* eight and forty Cities, with Suburbs to them, in which the *Levites* might live amongſt the Tribes, and of which Number, ſix were appointed to be Cities of Refuge for the Man-ſlayer to fly to, who had happened to kill a Man by Chance.

But Proviſion was made that he, who ſhould be duly convicted of wilful Murder, ſhould be put to Death; and in capital Caſes, it was provided, that none ſhould be convicted of ſuch Crimes

Crimes by the Evidence of one ſingle Man.

There was a Law likewiſe made, that every Daughter, who ſhould poſſeſs an Inheritance in any Tribe of the Children of *Iſrael*, ſhould be married to one of the Tribes of her Father, that ſo the Children of *Iſrael* might enjoy every one the Inhabitance of his Father; and the Inheritance not to be transferred to another Tribe. This was grounded upon a Law made before, which empowered Daughters to inherit Land, where the Heirs Male ſhould be deficient; and was the Caſe of *Zelophehad*'s Daughters, who, upon obtaining this Act, where required to marry within the Family of their own (*l*) Father's Tribe.

By this Time the forty Years Travel of the *Iſraelites* were near expired. *Moſes* therefore conſidering, that the preſent Generation of the *Iſraelites*, now ready to paſs over *Jordan*, to take Poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land, were either ſprung up ſince the Law was given at Mount *Sinai*, near forty Years before, or too young to remember and underſtand the Law then given, thought fit to repeat the Law to them.

A little before his Death, therefore, he aſſembled the People of *Iſrael*, on the firſt Day of the eleventh Month, in the fortieth Year from their Departure out of *Egypt* (the People being yet in the Plains of *Moab* by *Jordan*, and near *Jericho*) he repeated to them Briefly all that had befallen their Fathers ſince they left *Egypt*, the gracious Dealings of God with them, their Unruline ſs, Diſobedience and Rebellions, which had ſo often provoked the Lord to puniſh them, and by which Means they brought upon him that grievous Sentence, That they ſhould not enter into that good Land.

This Account he often repeated, that they might take Warning by the Miſcarriages of their Fore-fathers.

Then he repeated the Decalogue, and divers other Laws and Precepts, formerly given, tho' not without ſome Variation, with the Addition of ſome new Laws on divers Subjects, and ſome Explanations of the Old; exhorting them to a ſtrict Obſervation of them, promiſing that they ſhould ſoon enter the Land of *Canaan*, and alſo commanded them to deſtroy all the Idols of the Inhabitants of the Country, and to extirpate the People.

He encouraged them to be faithful unto God, aſſuring them, If they kept his Commandments, they ſhould have Bleſſings heaped upon them; and threatened them with all Manner of Calamities, if they departed from them.

He renewed the Covenant with the People in the Name of the Lord; commanding them with a loud Voice, to proclaim on the Mountains of *Gerizim* and *Hebal*, beyond *Jordan*, Bleſſings to all thoſe who kept the Covenant, and Curſes to thoſe who broke it: and to erect an Altar in the Land of *Canaan*, on which they ſhould write

(*l*) Father's. They were married into the Families, or ſome that were of the Familes of *Manaſſeh*, the Son of *Joſeph*. This takes off the Force of their Argument, who from hence would infer the Lawfulneſs of Marriages between Firſt-Couſins.

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The **DEATH** *of* **MOSES**, Deut. Ch. XXXIV. 5.

the Terms and Conditions of their Covenant with God.

These Things, with Rehearsals sometimes of their Fathers, and their own Prevarications, *Moses* not only delivered to the People by Word of Mouth, but wrote them in a Book, which he gave into the Custody and Care of the *Levites*, with Direction from the Lord, that they should put it into the Side of the Ark, to be kept there for a Witness against *Israel*, if they should rebel.

Besides this, *Moses* by the immediate Direction of God, composed a Song, in which were at large described, by the many Benefits and Favours of God to his People, their Ingratitude to, and Forgetfulness of him; the Punishments by which he corrected them, with Threatening of greater Judgments, if they persisted to provoke him by a Repetition of their Follies.

This Song *Moses* recited to the People, and gave Order that they should learnt it, and repeat it often; that when for their transgressing the Law, many Calamities and Troubles should befal them, this Song might be a Witness for God against them.

The Time was just now approaching, and the People ready to pass over *Jordan*; but the Lord having before told *Moses*, that he should not conduct the People into the promised Land, because of his Error at the Waters of *Meribah*, he bid him now get him up into the Mountain of *Abarim*, unto Mount *Nebo*, in the Land of *Moab*, over-against *Jericho*, and take a View of the Land of *Canaan*, and then die there on that Mount, as his Brother *Aaron* had died on Mount *Hor*.

Moses had before endeavoured to deprecate one Part of his Sentence, his not being permitted to enter into the promised Land, but in vain; he therefore humbly submitted to the Almighty's Pleasure now, and took a solemn Farewel of the People in a prophetic Blessing, which he pronounced upon each Tribe, as *Jacob* had done just before his Death.

And having before, by God's Command, appointed *Joshua* to be his Successor, to conduct the People to the promised Land, he lay'd his Hands upon him, in such a solemn and public Manner, as gave all the People to understand, that after *Moses's* Death *Joshua* was to be their Leader. *Moses* went up to the Top of *Pisgah*, over-against *Jericho*, from whence, as the Lord had promised him, he could take a full View of the Countries round about.

Though this Servant of God was very aged, being an hundred and twenty Years old, and on the Verge of the Grave, yet he was in such good Health and Strength, that his Eyes were neither dim, nor his natural Force abated; therefore, whilst these lasted, he survey'd with Pleasure the beauteous Prospect.

He viewed *Jericho*: saw *Lebanon*'s fair Cliffs and lofty Cedars; and then resigned his Soul into the Hands of Seraphs, who waited to convey him to a happier Canaan than what he had just before surveyed.

The Lord, sensible that the *Israel-*

ites were prone on the ſlighteſt Temptation to Idolatry, leſt they, when they remembered the wonderful Things *Moſes* had performed for them, ſhould pay any ſuperſtitious Adoration to his Remains after his Death, paid the funeral Honours to this great Prophet himſelf; and in a Valley in the Land of *Moab*, over-againſt *Beth-Peor*, buried him ſo ſecretly, that no Man ever knew where his Sepulchre was.

Thus departed this Life, * *Moſes*, a moſt eminent Servant of God, and the great Conductor of his choſen People, by whom he was lamented with great Solemnity, weeping and mourning for him in the Plains of *Moab* thirty Days.

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* *Moſes.* Thus far the ſacred Hiſtory was of *Moſes*'s Inditing, which contains the five firſt Books of the Bible, and is thence called the *Pentateuch.* All Antiquity, both ſacred and profane, acknowledge *Moſes* to have been the Legiſlator of the *Jews*; and that whole Nation had always carefully preſerved his Books as containing their Law.

As to the Truth of the Hiſtory, we have ſeveral Proofs.

1. It is the moſt Ancient Hiſtory in the World; for whether *Moſes* was co-temporary with *Inachus* the firſt King of *Argos*, who lived ſix hundred Years before the War of *Troy*: or whether he did not live till the Time of *Cecrops*, King of *Athens*, who reigned three hundred Years before that War, it is certain he was much older then *Homer*, or *Heſiod*, or any profane Writer.

2. *Moſes* was the only Perſon that had given a plain hiſtorical Account of the Origin of the World, and who had continued that Hiſtory uniform, and without any Interruption to his own Time. All that others have written of the firſt Ages was, as they owned themſelves, mere Ignorance, Darkneſs, and Fable.

3. *Moſes* wrote at a Time when he could be ſure of the Truth of what he wrote, and when it might have been eaſy to have convicted him of Falſhood, had he delivered any Fables.

4. We have nothing in ancient Hiſtory, nor in Fable, to prove that the World is older than *Moſes* repreſents it.

5. His Hiſtory agrees with the profane Hiſtorians of ſeveral Nations. We there find the Originals of ſeveral Nations, and their ancient Names, which many of them have preſerved. But if Religion did not convince us, that the Books of *Moſes* were written by divine Inſpiration, yet Reaſon ought to perſuade us, that this Hiſtory of *Moſes* is true, and the only one wherein we can find when the World began, and how long it has laſted.

As for the laſt Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, it was written by *Joſhua*, as a Preparation to his Hiſtory, and could not be ſuppoſed to be written by *Moſes*, as giving an Account of his Death.

Joſephus, the celebrated Hiſtorian, gives *Moſes* the following Character.

"He exceeded all that ever went before him in Wiſdom, and made the beſt Uſe of what he underſtood.

His Addreſs, as a Speaker, was admirable, eſpecially in thoſe Speeches which were made in public. But at the ſame time he was ſo great a Maſter of his own Paſſions, that he ſeemed to have none, or knew them only by Name, and by obſerving them in others.

He was one of the greateſt Commanders. As a Prophet, there was never his Equal; for all his Words were Oracles. Nor was he leſs famous to Poſterity for his Writings, than he was to the Age he lived in for his Actions.

Joſ. Antiq. lib. 4. chap. 8. ſect. 49.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Joshua succeeds Moses in the Conduct of the Israelites, *and is formally installed into his Office. Is encouraged by the Divine Promise. Sends out Spies to view the Land of* Jericho, *they are concealed by* Rhahab, *and afterwards return. The* Israelites *pass the River* Jordan. *Circumcision renewed.*

JOSHUA after the Death of *Moses*, who was under God, the great Conductor of the *Israelites*, succeeded to his Office, and was installed into the same with the usual Ceremonies. Having been immediately under the Direction of *Moses*, near forty years, in which he had been Eye-Witness to many wonderful Exertions of Providence in behalf of God's chosen People; he appeared to have been peculiarly adapted to the very important Work allotted him, at the Pleasure of the Almighty, and by the general Consent of the People, the Priest *Eleazar* laying his Hand upon him, and disposing to him some of the Honour that was upon himself, in the Sight of the whole Congregation.

Being now ready to enter and take Possession of the promised Land, God, for *Joshua*'s greater Encouragement, strengthen'd his former Commission, by giving him a more immediate and express Command, as he had before done to his Servant (*r*) *Moses*, to lead the People over *Jordan*; telling him, that every Place, upon which the Sole of their Feet should tread, should be their own; and assuring him, that

(*r*) *Moses.* God spake now to *Joshua* by his Angel, as he had done to *Moses* when he gave him the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, as appears from *Gal.* iii. 19. For Angels are the ministring Spirits of God, *Heb.* i. 14. For which Reason, as often as it is said in the Old Testament, that God appeared or spoke to any one, it must be understood, that he did it not by himself but by his Angel.

there ſhould not any Man be able to ſtand before him all the Days of his Life: For as he had been with *Moſes*, ſo he would be with him, and never fail, nor forſake him: Therefore he bid him be ſtrong and of good Courage, for he ſhould divide the Land for an Inheritance to the People. And to engage him to a Performance of the Law, which he had delivered to *Moſes*, he annexed a continual Series of Proſperity and Succeſs; charging him to make it his Study Day and Night, as the Standard of all his future Actions, and repeating his former Aſſurance of his Preſence with him whereſoever he went.

Joſhua thus encouraged by the Promiſe of God, prepared to execute the divine Command, and, that nothing material might be omitted, he ordered the Officers to go thro' the Camp and give Notice to the People, that within a few Days they ſhould paſs the *Jordan*, in order to poſſeſs the Land which the Lord their God had given them, and that they ſhould provide themſelves with Victuals for ſuch a March. The City of *Jericho* was juſt oppoſite to the Place where they were to paſs. *Joſhua* therefore (*s*) before his Order for their making Proviſion for this March, ſent two Spies thither to obſerve the Situation and Strength of the Place, and the Avenues to it; becauſe it would be the firſt Place they were to attack, after they had paſſed the River.

Theſe Spies entering *Jericho*, went to a public Houſe of Entertainment, which was kept by (*u*) *Rahab*, and there took up their Lodging. But being obſerved by ſome to go in there, Information was ſpeedily given to the King of *Jericho*, that two *Iſraelites* were come to ſearch the Country.

Upon this, the King ſent to *Rahab* to produce them; but ſhe, having timely Notice, had hid them upon the (*w*) Roof of the Houſe under the Stalks of the Flax, which ſhe had ſpread there.

Having thus ſecured the Men, ſhe put off the King's Meſſengers with a feigned Story, pretending that ſome Men came to her Houſe, but ſhe knew not what they were, nor whence they came; and that when it was dark, before the Gates were ſhut, they went out but ſhe knew not whither; and to prevent any farther Suſpicion, ſhe adviſed to purſue them quickly, for they could not be far off. They therefore ſent out ſeveral to take them,

(*s*) Before. This Direction for Marching is mentioned in the Text, before the ſending the Spies to *Jericho*. But it ſeems the Spies were ſent before that, and returned to the Camp at *Shittim*, before they took their March towards *Jordan*.

(*u*) *Rahab*. Interpreters are at Variance about the Quality of this Woman; moſt agreeing ſhe was an Hoſteſs, which is very probable; and that ſhe is rendered an Harlot upon the Account of Idolatry; for it is common Phraſe in Scripture to ſay,—*Go a whoring after other Gods*. That ſhe was a Victualler is unqueſtionable.

(*w*) Roof. The Roofs of Houſes were then built flat, ſo that they could walk upon them and ſet their Goods there, having Battlements round them to ſecure them from falling off. And ſuch a Roof it was that *David* afterwards walked upon when he unhappily eſpied the fair *Bathſheba* bathing herſelf.

Scarlet

who went as far as the Fords of *Jordan*, but in vain.

As soon as they were departed, *Rahab* went up to the Men she had hid, and thus accosted them; *I know the Lord hath given you this Land, and the Fame of you is become so terrible to us, that our People are utterly discouraged.*

We have heard, how the Lord hath dried up the Water of the Red Sea for you to pass over, when ye came out of Egypt; *and how you subdued* Sihon *and* Og, *the two* Amorite *Kings, on the other Side of* Jordan. *These Actions have flashed Terror among our People, and quite dispirited them. Your God is the only God in Heaven and Earth.*

Now therefore, in Regard of the Service I have done in concealing you, shew Favour to me and my Family, when you come into Power, and save us alive; and of this ye shall give me some Assurance.

They readily promised upon their Lives to secure her, and all that belonged to her. Upon which she let them down by a Cord from the Window, which faced the Country, for her house stood on the Town Wall.

When they were down, she advised them to make to the Mountains to avoid the Pursuers, and to conceal themselves three Days, till the Search was over.

The Spies seeing the Sincerity of the Woman in consulting their Security, resolved to make her easy in their Promise to her; and for a Token of their Integrity in the Performance of it, gave her this farther Assurance. When she should see the *Israelitish* Army approach the Town, they bid her to be sure to tie a (x) scarlet Twine in the Window tho' which she let them down; and to bring her Father and Mother, Brethren, and all her Family home to her, and be careful to keep them within Doors, that when their Forces should enter the Town, by this Token they might distinguish the House, and spare them. And if any should straggle from the House, their Blood should be upon their own Heads; but if any one in the House should come to any Damage, they would answer for it. To these Terms she gladly agreed, and so dismissed them.

The Spies having hitherto thus happily succeeded, took *Rahab*'s Advice, and made the best of their Way to the Mountains, where they lay hid three Days; in which Time, those that went in pursuit of them, despairing to find them, returned to *Jericho*; and the Spies descending from the Mountains, forded over *Jordan*, arrived safe in the Camp, and gave *Joshua* their general a faithful Account of their Expedition; adding, That for certain the Lord had delivered the

(x) Scarlet. This being a Token of Deliverance to *Rahab* and her Family, is not unaptly reckoned a Type of the Blood of Christ, by which we are delivered from the Death of Soul and Body. This is the Opinion of several Fathers, particularly St. *Ambrose* and St. *Augustine*.

Country into their Hands, for the People were quite diſpirited at the Fame of them.

Joſhua alarmed at this Information, departed from *Shittim*, and led the People down to the River. Then putting the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh* in Mind of the Agreement made between *Moſes* and them, That they, leaving Families and Cattle on this Side *Jordan*, ſhould, with their beſt Forces, go over armed before their Brethren, to help ſubdue their Enemies, and place them in their Poſſeſſions. They acknowledged the Agreement, and declared their Readineſs to go; promiſing in all Things to be ſubject to him their General, as they had been to *Moſes*, and in all Things to obey his Commands, under the Penalty of Death.

Proviſion being made for the Army in their March, the Officers going through the Hoſt, commanded the People, that when they ſhould ſee the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord their God, and the Prieſts, the Levites, bearing it, then they ſhould move and follow it, that they might know the Way by which they were to go; becauſe they had never before paſſed that Way.

And that a Decency might be obſerved in their March, Direction was given, that they ſhould leave a Space of about two thouſand Cubits between the Ark and them.

Theſe Diſpoſitions being made, *Joſhua* early in the Morning, on the ninth Day of the firſt Month, exhorted the People to ſanctify themſelves, becauſe the Lord would do Wonders next Day among them. And giving Orders for the Prieſts to move, they took up the Ark, and marched with it before the People to the Banks of *Jordan*, where they halted.

Here the Lord told *Joſhua*, that he would ſo diſtinguiſh him in the Sight of *Iſrael*, that they ſhould know his Preſence ſhould be with him, as it had been with *Moſes*.

He directed him to bid the Prieſts, who were to carry the Ark, ſtop upon the Brink of the River, which they did; and *Joſhua* thereupon calling the People together, to hear the Words of the Lord their God, told them, *That they ſhould thereby know, that the living God was amongſt them, and would drive out the Nations from before them; for the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the Earth ſhould paſs before them into the River* Jordan, *and as ſoon as the Feet of the Prieſts that bare it ſhould touch the Waters, they ſhould divide, and ſtand on a Heap.*

Accordingly the Prieſts marched into the River with the Ark, and ſtopping in the midſt of it, they ſtood on firm Ground; the rapid Stream dividing, and the Waters forgetting their Fluidity, condenſe in Heaps, to afford them a dry Paſſage.

Thus did God make good his Word to *Joſhua*, in promiſing to magnify him in the Sight of the People, by dividing the Waters of *Jordan*, as he had done before to *Moſes*, when the *Iſraelites* had paſſed the *Red Sea*.

Before this miraculous Exertion of divine Power, the Lord commanded *Joſhua* to ſelect twelve Men, one out of

of each Tribe, who, as ſoon as the People had paſſed the River, were to take up twelve Stones from the Place where the Prieſts ſtood on dry Ground, according to the Number of the twelve Tribes, and to ſet them up as a Memorial of this great Miracle, in that Place. He commanded them likewiſe to take other twelve Stones, and to carry them on Shore, for another Memorial of the ſame Miracle.

The Prieſts that carried the Ark walked on dry Ground to the Midſt of *Jordan*; and ſtopping there, as *Joſhua* had ordered them, he commanded the reſt of the People to follow, forty thouſand of the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, well armed, leading the Van.

When they were ſafely arrived on the other Side of the River, the General commanded the Prieſts that bare the Ark, which ſtood in the Midſt of *Jordan*, till all the People had paſſed over, to come out of the River with it; which they had no ſooner done, but the Waters returned to their natural Channel, and overflowed the Banks, as they uſually did.

The *Iſraelites* having thus ſecurely paſſed *Jordan*, on the tenth Day of the firſt Month, incamped in a Place called afterwards *Gilgal*, which was in the Eaſt Border of *Jericho*.

Here *Joſhua* erected the twelve Stones which the twelve Men had brought out of *Jordan* as a Monument to Poſterity, that when the Deſcendants of the *Iſraelites* in future Times ſhould aſk the Reaſon of it, they might know that the Lord their God had dried up the Waters of *Jordan*, and cauſed his People *Iſrael* to paſs that River on dry Land, as he had formerly dried up the *Red Sea* for their Paſſage out of *Egypt*; and that all the People of the Earth might be ſenſible of the Omnipotency of the mighty God of *Iſrael*.

This extraordinary Event was ſoon rumured throughout the adjacent Parts and filled the People with Amazement and Horror; for when the Kings of the *Amorites*, which were on the Weſt Side of *Jordan*, and the Kings of the *Canaanites*, which inhabited by the Sea, heard that the Lord had miraculouſly conveyed his People over the River by dividing the Waters, their Hearts ſunk for Fear, and their Courage failed them.

Joſhua having thus conducted the *Iſraelites* over the River, God commanded him to cauſe them all to be circumciſed: Which being done, the Lord ſaid to *Joſhua*, *This Day I have taken away the* (a) *Shame of* Egypt *from you*. And from this Act of Circumciſion, the Place where it was done was then called (*b*) *Gilgal*. Here the *Iſraelites* tarried till their Circum-

(*a*) Shame. This Shame might be the reproachful Diffidence of the *Egyptains*, who would not believe that the Lord would make good his Promiſe in bringing his People into the promiſed Land.

(*b*) *Gilgal*. This Place had its name from the Riſe of Circumciſion, which was there renewed. It lay about two miles to the eaſtward of *Jericho*: and St. *Jerom* tells us, that it was, in his Time, held in great Veneration by the Inhabitants of this Country.

Paſſover

ciſion-wounds were healed; and here it was they kept the (*c*) Paſſover, on the fourteenth Day of the firſt Month, in the Evening.

Now the *Iſraelites* began to enjoy the Good of the Land; the delicious Products of the promiſed Inheritance: for on the next Day after the Paſſover they eat of the Corn, and there being plenty of all Fruits, on the Morrow the Manna was withdrawn.

CHAP. II.

An Angel appears to Joſhua. Jericho *taken. The Walls fall down. The* Iſraelites *are conquered at* Ai. *Achan puniſhed as the Cauſe of God's Diſpleaſure. The* Iſraelites *conquer their Enemies at* Ai.

ALL things being ready for approaching t he City of *Jericho*, *Joſhua* gave the Word, and the Army marched towards it. The Place was ſtrong, well provided, and full of Inhabitants, who had retired into it, and ſeemed reſolved to make a brave Defence. *Joſhua* therefore undertook to view the Place by himſelf, in order to find out the moſt advantageous Approaches to it. Whilſt he was making his Obſervation, there appeared, as he thought, the awful Form of a Man, but with a Luſtre in his Face, that beſpoke him more than mortal. In his Hand he had a flaming Sword, and his whole Appearance far ſurpaſſed any thing of human Nature. The *Iſraelitiſh* General advanced to this (*d*) great Unknown with a Courage becoming his Character, and boldly demanded, who he was for? He anſwer'd, For *Iſrael*, of whoſe Army and People he was the Guardian.

At theſe Words the General fell (*e*) proſtrate, and waited the Command of his Lord, who bid him looſe his Sandals, and not profane the Holy Place with irreverent Approaches. *Joſhua* obeyed, and received new Orders for the better Management of the Siege of *Jericho*. He was to cauſe all the Forces to march round the Place ſix days ſucceſſively; and that the ſeventh Day the Prieſts ſhould take the ſeven Trumpets made of Rams-horns, which were uſed to declare the Jubilee Year; that they ſhould go before

(*c*) Paſſover. This was the third Paſſover the *Iſraelites* celebrated.

The firſt, was the Day before they came out of *Egypt*.

The ſecond, was the Year after upon their receiving the Law, and ſetting up the Tabernacle in *Sinai*.

The third, was this here in the Holy Land, in the Plains of *Jericho*.

(*d*) Great, &c. This was an Angel in the Shape of a Man, which the *Hebrew* calls *Gebir*. God always adapts the Appearance of his Meſſengers to the Occaſion.

Thus Chriſt appeared to *Mary Magdalen* in the Garden, in the Shape of a Gardener. To the two Diſciples walking to *Emmaus* he appeared in the Habit of a Traveller, *&c.*

(*e*) Proſtrate. By this Act of Adoration, the Title of Lord, performed and given by *Joſhua*, and accepted by the other, it is evident, that this Guardian or Captain of the Lord's Hoſt was Chriſt, the Son of God, who was pleaſed in this manner to appear to *Joſhua*, both to encourage and direct him.

Without

the Ark, and round the City, and when the Trumpets ſounded firſt loud, and then low, the People ſhould all give a Shout, for then the Walls of the City ſhould fall, and every Man ſhould march in at the Place which was directly before him.

Having rounded the City ſix Days, as they were commanded, on the ſeventh by break of Day they compaſſed it ſeven times, and at the ſeventh time, when the Prieſts blew with the Trumpets, the General ſaid to the People, *Shout! for the Lord hath given you the City.* With that the People gave a Shout, and thereupon the Walls of the City fell down flat; ſo that the Army marched directly up to it, and took it, putting all to the Sword, both Man and Beaſt, Old and young; only *Rahab*, and thoſe in her Houſe, were ſaved alive: For *Joſhua* had given a ſtrict Charge before-hand to the two Spies, (which ſhe had formerly concealed,) to take Care, when the Town ſhould be taken, to go to her Houſe, and bring out her Family, in diſcharge of their Oath to her; which they accordingly did, and left her with all her Kindred and Subſtance ſafe (*g*) without the Camp of *Iſrael*.

Then ſetting Fire to the City, they deſtroyed every thing in it, except the Silver and Gold, and Veſſels of Braſs and Iron, which were put into the Treaſury of the Lord, as it had been commanded. And leſt any one ſhould attempt to rebuild this City, *Joſhua* publiſhed this prophetic Imprecation on the bold Undertaker; *that he ſhould lay the Foundation thereof in his Firſtborn, and ſet up the Gates thereof in his youngeſt Son.* By which he meant, that it ſhould be the (*b*) Ruin of his Family.

Joſhua ſeems to have been perſuaded of the Succeſs of this Undertaking, for before the City was taken, *Joſhua* had cautioned the People not to ſpare any thing that was in it, but to deſtroy all that lay in their Way, except Silver, Gold, Braſs and Iron; which were to be conſecrated to the Lord. And therefore he warned them not to meddle with any Thing, for Fear of bringing a Curſe; not only upon themſelves, but upon all the Nation of the *Iſraelites*.

Notwithſtanding the ſtrict Charge of *Joſhua* againſt meddling with any thing that was devoted to this general Deſtruction, or conſecrated to the Lord, yet ſo prevailing was the ſacrilegious Thirſt of Gold, that one of the Tribe of *Judah*, whoſe Name was *Achan*, contrary to the Command of the General, took ſome Things of the Spoil of either Sort, and hid them. This prov-

(*g*) Without, &c. Being *Alliens*, or Heathens, they were not permitted to come within the Camp, till they were proſelyted, or at leaſt legally purified.

(*b*) Ruin. This was exactly fulfilled in *Hiel* the *Bethelite*; who in the Days of *Ahab* King of *Iſrael* (about five hundred Years after) began to rebuild *Jericho* with the Loſs of his eldeſt Son *Abiram* and finiſh'd it with the Loſs of *Segub* his youngeſt Son.

Accurſed

ed of ill Conſequence to *Iſrael* in general, which was diſcovered upon this Occaſion.

Joſhua being deſirous to take in a little City, named *Ai*, near *Bethaven* to the Eaſt of *Bethel*, and knowing that it was neither populous nor well defended, detached a Body of three thouſand Men only to go and attack it, who no ſooner approached the Town, but the Inhabitants ſallyed out and repulſed them, and drove them to their Camp, whither thoſe that eſcaped went ſo frighted, that they brought a Terror upon the whole Army.

This Defeat ſo afflicted *Joſhua*, that rending his Cloaths, and proſtrating himſelf before the Ark of the Lord, he lay there till the Evening, both he and the Elders, in Token of extream Sorrow and Humiliation, ſprinkled Duſt on their reverent Heads.

But *Joſhua*, being wholly ignorant of the Offence, and deſirous to know the Cauſe that had provoked God thus to deſert his People, in this humble Expoſtulation complained to him, *Wherefore, O Lord God, haſt thou brought this People over* Jordan *to deliver them into the Hands of the* Amorites *to deſtroy them? We had been happy, hadſt thou permitted us to have dwelt on the other Side of* Jordan. *What ſhall I ſay, when* Iſrael *turn their Backs upon their Enemies? For when the* Canaanites, *and all the Inhabitants of this Land ſhall hear this, they will encompaſs us, and cut us off; and what will become of thy Honour!*

Leſt *Joſhua* ſhould be diſpirited by the Conqueſt the Enemy had obtained over them, or pine under the Apprehenſion of being deſerted by him, God told him there was a latent Cauſe of his Diſpleaſure among the People. That ſome of them had taken of the (*k*) accurſed Thing, and alſo of thoſe Things which were devoted to the Lord, and pretending as if they had brought it all into the Treaſury of God, had concealed it for their own Uſe. And to put him in a Way to clear the Camp of this accurſed Thing, which had brought this Judgment upon them, the Lord commanded *Joſhua* to proclaim among the People, *There is an accurſed Thing in the Midſt of thee, O* Iſrael. *Ye cannot ſtand before your Enemies, until ye have removed the accurſed Thing from among you.*

Then directing *Joſhua* how he ſhould find out the Offender; and when he was found and convicted, how he ſhould be puniſhed. He early next Morning ſummoned all the Tribes before the Lord; and the Lot being caſt upon the Tribes, the Tribe of *Judah* was the Tribe to whom the guilty Perſon be-

(*k*) Accurſed. In the ſame Senſe is the Word *Anathema* uſed in the New Teſtament, by St. *Paul*, who pronounces Offenders *Anathema*, ſeparated from God, that is, accurſed: Which is the old Word for Excommunication, upon the Breach of ſeveral Canons in the moſt early Ages of the Church.

In this one Inſtance 'tis obſervable, That tho' it was but one Man that was actually guilty; yet the Guilt was charged upon the whole People, and they felt the Effects thereof, till they had convinced and puniſhed the Offender. How great then is the Guilt of Nations in general where Sins are Epidemical, and repeated from Age to Age?

Royal.

longed. Then proceeding by Lot from Tribe to Family, from Family to Houſhold, and thence to particular Perſons, the Lot fell at laſt upon *Achan*.

Having thus happily diſcovered the Perſon, *Joſhua*, like a prudent Judge, with great Mildneſs examined the Criminal, and brought him to a Confeſſion. *I have ſinned againſt the Lord God of* Iſrael, *ſaid he, for when I ſaw among the Spoil a* (l) *Royal Garment, and two hundred Shekels of Silver, with a* (m) *Wedge of Gold of fifty Shekels Weight, my Covetouſneſs prompted me to take them, which I did, and hid them in the Earth in the Midſt of my Tent.*

Joſhua, for the more evident conviction, ſent Meſſengers to *Achan*'s Tent; who finding the Things hid, as he had confeſſed, brought them to the Aſſembly, and laid them before the Lord.

And now *Achan* being duly convicted, by his own Confeſſion and the Notoriouſneſs of the Fact, *Joſhua* proceeded to Execution, by the expreſs Command of God; which was thus: they took *Achan*, with the Garments, the Money, and the Wedge of Gold, as Evidences of his Guilt, and with him his (o) Sons, his Daughters, his Cattle, his Tent, and all his Moveables, and brought them into the Valley of *Achor* (which from him took its Name, ſignifying Trouble) where he and his Family, being firſt ſtoned, were afterwards burned. And to perpetuate the Memory of this for a Warning to others, they raiſed a great Heap of Stones over them.

The Vengeance of the Almighty being appeaſed by the Sentence executed upon the Delinquent *Achan*, he encouraged *Joſhua* to attack *Ai* afreſh, aſſuring him that he had given the King of *Ai* and all his People and Country into his Hand, and that he ſhould do to them as he had done to *Jericho* and her King; only for the Encouragement of the Soldiers, he allowed them Plunder of the City and the Cattle for themſelves; giving *Joſhua* particular (p) Inſtructions to lay a party of Men in (q) Ambuſcade behind the City.

In order to this Action, *Joſhua* ſelected thirty thouſand Men, out of which he appointed five thouſand to hide themſelves between *Bethel* and *Ai*, who, upon the Signal that he ſhould give them, which was by holding up a Spear with a Banner upon it, ſhould enter the City, and ſet it on fire; him-

(l) Royal. This is render'd *Babyloniſh*, ſuppoſed to be rich, ſuch a Garment as the King of *Babylon* formerly wore.

(m) Wedge. This was made in the Form of a Tongue, and for that Reaſon is not improperly ſometimes called a *Tongue of Gold*.

(o) Sons, &c. This Judgement only appertains to God, and to whom he will reveal it. To Man he hath expreſsly commanded, not to puniſh the Fathers for the Children, nor the Children for the Father's ſake, but that every one ſhould be put to Death for his own Sin.

(p) Inſtructions. God would not deſtroy *Ai* by a Miracle, as he had done *Jericho* becauſe he had a Mind to make his People formidable for their Power and Policy to other Nations, with whom they were afterwards to engage.

(q) Ambuſcade. This was the firſt Ambuſcade we read of in Hiſtory.

ſelf having firſt, by another Stratagem, drawn all the Forces out of the Town to purſue him in his pretended Flight.

Every thing being prepared according to the Direction of *Joſhua*, he drew up before the North Part of the City of *Ai*, and towards Night he marched into the Valley in Sight of the Enemy to tempt them to ſally out upon him. This ſucceeded as *Joſhua* deſired; for the King of *Ai*, thinking he had them ſure now, early the next Morning drew out all his Forces to give *Iſrael* battle; who at the firſt Charge gave Way and fled.

This ſo animated the King of *Ai*'s Army, that he concluded the *Iſraelites* fled indeed thro' Fear of them, they called out all the Citizens to aſſiſt in the Purſuit, which they eagerly did, leaving the Town naked and defenceleſs. But this Confidence of Victory coſt them dear; for when *Joſhua* by his ſham Flight had drawn them a good Diſtance from the City, he gave the Signal to the Ambuſcade, who immediately entered the City, and ſet it on fire.

When *Joſhua* by the Smoke perceived his Men had poſſeſſed themſelves of the Town, he faced about, and charged the *Aian* Army; who not in the leaſt expecting the *Iſraelites* would rally, began to think of retiring into the City; but when they ſaw their City in Flames, they were ſo diſpirited, that they had no Power to fight or fly. In the mean Time the Ambuſcade having performed their Orders in burning the City, fell upon the Rear of the King of *Ai*'s diſmayed Forces, who being thus encompaſſed were cut to Pieces.

Having thus compleatly vanquiſhed the Enemy, *Joſhua* marched to *Ai*, and put all he found in it to the Sword; ſo that the Number of the Slain that Day amounted to twelve thouſand Men and Women.

The Cattle and Spoil of the City was given to the Soldiers, who burnt the City, and made it a Heap of Rubbiſh. As for the King of *Ai*, he was taken Priſoner in the Flight; and being brought before the General, he was by his Command hanged on a Tree till Sun-ſet, at which Time he was taken down, and buried under a great Heap of Stones at the Entrance of the Gate of the City.

CHAP. III.

Joſhua *erects an Altar, and repeats to the People the Words of the Law of* Moſes. *Several Kings combine againſt* Iſrael, *and are condemned to perpetual Bondage.* Joſhua *reſcues* Gibeon *from the Attack of five Kings. Is impowered to confirm his Authority by an extraordinary Command. Returns and re-encamps his Army in* Gilgal. *Obtains divers ſignal Victories. The Tribes are appointed their diſtinct Lots of Inheritance. The Death of* Joſhua.

JOSHUA having thus happily ſucceeded in this Action againſt *Ai*, in Token of Gratitude to the great Giver of Victory, erected an Altar to him in Mount *Ebal*, as the Lord had by *Moſes* before commanded, on which he offered Burnt-Offerings, and

and ſacrificed Peace-Offerings. And then he not only read unto the People both *Iſraelites* and Strangers the Words of the Law, given by *Moſes*, but wrote alſo upon great Stones a (t) Copy of the Law which *Moſes* had written.

The Fame of the *Iſraelites* Succeſs againſt *Jericho* and *Ai*, and the terrible Slaughter of the Inhabitants, alarmed all the Kings on that Side *Jordan*, who conſulting the common Security, confederated together, and entered into a League for their mutual Defence.

But the *Gibeonites*, who were more deeply affected with the Rumour of the *Iſraelites* Courage and Power, diſtruſting a confederated Force againſt ſo great and numerous a People, and ſo well ſkilled in the Art of War, had recourſe to a Stratagem to ſave themſelves from the general Deſtruction, which they plainly perceived, hung over their Heads.

They choſe a certain Number of their Men, who were inſtructed to feign themſelves to be Ambaſſadors, come from a far Country, to treat for Peace, and enter into a League with *Iſrael*.

To give this Deception an Air of Truth, they dreſſed themſelves in old Cloaths, with old clouted Shoes on their Feet, and put dry mouldy Bread into old Sacks, and Wine into old * Bottles.

Thus accoutred, they came to the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp at *Gilgal*, and preſenting themſelves before the General, told him, They were come from a far Country, and deſired to enter into a League with *Iſrael*.

The People at firſt ſuſpected theſe Ambaſſadors, and told them, that Perhaps they poſſeſſed Part of that Land which God had given them; and, if ſo, they could not make Peace with them. *Joſhua* putting this Queſtion directly to them, aſked them, Who they were, and from whence they came? To which they cunningly, but falſely replied, *From a far Country are we come, where we have heard of the Fame of the Lord thy God; of all that he did for thee in* Egypt, *and to* Sihon *and* Og, *the* Amorite *Kings. Wherefore our Governors bid us take Proviſion for our Journey, and tell you, we are your ſervants, and deſire to be in Amity with you.*

Then producing their mouldy Bread, their torn Bottles, and their old Cloaths, and Shoes, they aſſured them, that they took the Bread hot out of their Houſes, when they came from Home, that their Bottles were then new, and that their Garments and Shoes were worn old by reaſon of the Length of their Journey.

The *Iſraelites* were prevailed on in this Reſpect, tho' they had an infallible Method of coming to the Knowledge of the Deceit. But neglecting to aſk Counſel at the Mouth of the

(t) Copy. It is no great Difficulty to apprehend how many of the Gentile Nations came to imitate the *Jews* in many of their religious Obſervances and Rites, ſince the *Moſaick* Law was ſo publickly expoſed to the Sight of all.

* Old Bottles. Theſe Bottles were made of Leather, in which they formerly, and now in ſome Countries, keep their Wine.

Lord, they ſuffered themſelves to be impoſed on by the ſeeming Simplicity of the Subtil *Gibeonites*.

This Stratagem of theirs had its deſired Effect. The credulous *Iſraelites* believed the plauſible Story of the *Gibeonites*, confirmed ſufficiently, as they thought, by demonſtrable Tokens, and of which their own Eyes were Judges; ſo that without any farther Heſitation or Scruple, they received them into their Alliance; *Joſhua* making Peace with them to let them live, and the Princes of the Congregation ſwearing ſolemnly to obſerve it.

But within three Days this Cheat was diſcovered; and they, who pretended to come from a diſtant Country, proved to be their Neighbours, and inhabited a Part of that Land which God had given *Iſrael* to poſſeſs.

When the *Iſraelites* found out the Deſign of the *Gibeonites*, which was to prevent their Cities from ſharing the Fate of their Neighbours, they could not forbear mutinying againſt the Princes who had ſworn to obſerve the League; which they perceiving, endeavoured to pacify them by urging the Neceſſity they were under of keeping their Oath, leſt they ſhould incur God's Diſpleaſure; and that though the Alliance extended to the ſaving their Lives, yet it did not exempt them from Tribute or Service, from which they might reap conſiderable Advantages, intending to make them Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water for the Uſe of all the Congregation.

This being approved, appeaſed the People; and *Joſhua* calling for the *Gibeonites*, expoſtulated the Matter with them, for thus impoſing on, and deceiving them; till they in Excuſe anſwered, That they were ſenſible God had given them all the Land where they dwelt, and command them to kill all the Inhabitants; and that they had made Uſe of this Stratagem to ſave their Lives.

Tho' they eſcaped with their Lives, they were juſtly condemned to perpetual Bondage, as a Puniſhment for their wicked Deſign; and *Joſhua* himſelf pronounced this Sentence againſt them. *Now therefore are ye curſed, and there ſhall none of you be freed from being Bondmen, even Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, for the* (u) *Uſe of my God.*

The *Gibeonites* glad to come off ſo well, replied, *Behold, we are in thy Hand, do with us what thou wilt.*

Thus *Joſhua* delivered the *Gibeonites* from the Fury of the *Iſraelites*, who would have put them all to the Sword. But tho' they had by this Policy ſaved their Lives, with the Loſs of their Liberty, yet their Neighbours the *Amorites* put them in freſh Danger of loſing them. For deſerting the Common Intereſt, and making a ſeparate League with *Iſrael* for themſelves, they reſolved to take Revenge of them.

(u) Houſe. From the *Gibeonites* being thus given or dedicated to the Service of the Tabernacle, and of all the Congregation, their Poſterity, after the building of the Temple, were called *Nethinims* (that is, *Given.*)

Jebus

Accordingly *Adonizedec*, King of * *Jebus*, taking with him four neighbouring Kings, *Hoham*, King of *Hebron*; *Piram*, King of *Jarmuth*; *Japhia*, King of *Lachiſh*; and *Debir*, King of *Eglon*, with their joined Forces, they encamped before *Gibeon*.

The *Gibeonites*, not daring to truſt to the Strength of their City againſt ſo potent and confederate a Force, diſpatched away Meſſengers to ther new and great Allies to their Camp at *Gilgal*, to acquaint them, That the Kings of the *Amorites*, that dwelt in the Mountains, had armed againſt them; and to intreat them to come up to their Relief with Speed.

Joſhua was bound in Honour and Intereſt to ſuccour them, to which God himſelf gave particular Encouragement, aſſuring him of Victory. Upon which *Joſhua* by a ſwift March came up with them by Night, and ſurprized them in the Morning.

The Action was hot for ſome time, but they were ſoon put to flight; and as they fled, a Storm of Hail overtook them, which fell with ſuch Violence upon them, that more were deſtroyed by the Hail-ſtones than by the Sword. The five confederate Kings, eſcaping the Storm, in their Flight, made to a Cave in a Place called *Makedah*, and there hid themſelves from the Purſuit of the Enemy; but *Joſhua* having Intelligence of their Concealment, ordered the Cave to be blocked up, and ſet a Guard upon it, to prevent their Eſcape; commanding the reſt of the Army to continue the Purſuit, and to do Execution on their Enemies, leſt they ſhould retreat to any fortified Place.

That they might not want Time to compleat their Victory, *Joſhua*, addreſſing himſelf to God in Prayer, received Authority from him to command the Sun, in the Sight of *Iſrael*, to ſtand ſtill, ſaying, *Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon* Gibeon, *and thou Moon in the Valley of* Ajalon.

The heavenly Orbs obeyed, and ſtood unmoved at his Command. This was a long Day indeed; for never before or ſince did God honour Man ſo much as to change the Courſe of Nature, and ſtop the Motion of the rolling Luminaries.

Having received ſo remarkable a Diſplay of divine Favour and Concurrence, in vanquiſhing the Foes of *Iſrael*, *Joſhua* returned from the Chaſe, and ordered the Cave to be opened, where the five Kings lay hid; he commanded them to be brought before him. Then calling for the Officers of the Army, he bid them ſet their Feet upon the Necks of thoſe Kings; which they did.

This was not to inſult over the wretched Captives, but an emblematical Prediction of their future Succeſs over the Enemies of God's People. For thus ſays *Joſhua*, I will do to all that oppoſe you. Then commanding Execution to be done upon them, he cauſed them to be hanged up on ſeveral Trees until the

* *Jebus*. This Place was afterwards, in *David*'s Time, called *Jeruſalem*.

Even

Evening; when he ordered them to be taken down, and caſt into the Cave where they had hid themſelves, making their intended Sanctuary their Sepulchre.

Having totally routed the combined Forces, *Joſhua* proceeded to reduce the Cities to ſubjection of the *Iſraelites*. He marched firſt to *Makkedah*, then to *Libnah*; from thence to *Lachiſh*, where he ſlew the King of *Gezar*, who came to the Relief of *Lachiſh*; from *Lachiſh* he marched to *Eglon*, from *Eglon* to *Hebron*, and from *Hebron* to *Debir*. All which Places he took by Storm, and put the Inhabitants, both Kings and People, to the Sword, as God had commanded.

Joſhua having performed ſuch great Exploits, and conquered ſo many Kings and Nations in *(y)* one Expedition through the Aſſiſtance of the mighty God of *Iſrael*, returned with his victorious Army to his Camp at *Gilgal*.

The Signal Conqueſts of the *Iſraelites* ſpread a Fame, and greatly alarmed the more diſtant Nations, eſpecially the *Hazorites*, whoſe King thinking it in vain for the Princes of *Canaan* to encounter ſingly with ſo puiſſant and victorious an Army, ſent to *Joab* King of *Madon*, to the King of *Shimron*, and to the King of *Achſhaph*, and to all the neighbouring Princes within Reach, to invite them into a League, that with their united Force they might drive the *Iſraelites* out of the Land they had conquered.

Enraged at the continual Succeſs of the *Iſraelites*, the different Powers, next Campaign, rais'd a very numerous Army to engage *Joſhua*; whoſe God, to chaſtiſe the Pride and Preſumption of his Enemies, and to encourage his General, bid him not to fear them, *For To-morrow*, ſays he, *I will deliver them into the Hand of* Iſrael, *and thou ſhalt diſable their Horſes, and burn their Chariots*.

Relying on the Strength of their Numbers, the combined Potentates vainly flattered themſelves they ſhould intimidate the General of the *Iſraelites*; but *Joſhua*, in purſuance of the Encouragement and Inſtructions God had given him without Delay took the Field, marched directly towards the Enemy, and fell ſo ſuddenly upon them, that he immediately routed them; and in the Purſuit put all to the Sword. And becauſe *Jabin*, the King of *Hazor*, had been the Head of the Confederacy, he cauſed that City to be burnt to the Ground; but all the other Cities, whoſe Inhabitants were ſlain in the Action, he left ſtanding, and gave the Cattle and Plunder of them to the Soldiers.

Thus did *Joſhua* by Degrees recover all the Land of *Canaan*, ſubduing the People that poſſeſſed it, and ſlaying all their Kings, one and thirty in Number, with the *Anakites* or Giants, of whom he left none remaining, except in *Gaza*, *Gath* and *Aſhdod*. And now *Joſhua* began to think of a Settlement, which he did, by dividing the Land beyond

(y) One Expedition. All theſe great Atchievements are by ſome Chronologers reckoned to have been performed in the firſt Year of *Joſhua*'s Government, and placed in the Year of the World 2553.

Jordan, among the nine Tribes and half; who being ſettled in their ſeveral Poſſeſſions, *Joſhua* ſet up the Tabernacle at *Shiloh*.

Then calling the *Reubenites*, *Gadites* and the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, and acknowledging that they had faithfully kept their Covenant in accompanying their Brethren, and helping them to ſubdue their Enemies, he kindly diſmiſſed them, adviſing them to continue ſtedfaſt in their Duty to God; and giving them his Bleſſing, they returned to their Families, loaded with Spoils, conſiſting of Gold, Braſs, Iron, Raiment, and a great Quantity of Cattle, which was their Share of the Plunder taken from the Enemy, during the War.

Theſe two Tribes and half, being ſafely arrived on the Borders of *Jordan*, erected an Altar, not for any religious Uſe, but as a Memorial to ſucceeding Ages, that tho' they were parted from their Brethren by *Jordan*, yet they were all of one Extraction and Religion, and had an equal Right to the Altar of the Lord at *Shiloh*, and the Worſhip performed there.

This had like to have proved of fatal Conſequence, and occaſioned a War between them, and the other Tribes; to whom the Matter being either miſrepreſented, or they miſapprehending it, and ſuſpecting their Brethren on the other Side of *Jordan*, were ready to revolt from God and them, they unanimouſly aſſembled their Forces at *Shiloh*, in order to declare War againſt them.

But before they proceeded to Extremities, they choſe ten Princes, one out of each Tribe; and they the Chiefs of their Families, with *Phineas* and *Eleazar*, and ſent them away to enquire into the Cauſe of this new-erected Altar.

On their arrival, they accoſted them in very ſevere Terms, charging them with Rebellion againſt the Lord. To aggravate the Matter farther, they put them in Mind of the Sin of *Peor*; and to let them ſee that it was not out of an officious buſy Temper or Humour that they came to them thus, but out of a generous Concern for the whole People, they ſaid, *If thou thus rebel againſt the Lord, he will ſoon be angry with the whole Congregation of* Iſrael.

This they enforced by the late Inſtance of *Achan*. And to prevent any Objection, and take from them all Pretence of Excuſe or Defence, they added, *If ye have done this from any Apprehenſion that the Land ye poſeſs on that Side* Jordan *is unclean, or leſs holy than ours, becauſe the Tabernacle is on our Side the River, return and ſettle among us where the Tabernacle reſteth; but by no Means rebel againſt the Lord, nor us, in building you an Altar beſides the Altar of the Lord.*

The *Reubenites*, *Gadites* and *Manaſſites*, were very much concerned at the ill Opinion their Brethren entertained of them. But Well knowing their own Innocency, with a ſolemn Appeal to God, returned anſwer to *Phineas* and his Companions, in this manner:

The Lord of the whole World, and all Iſrael, *ſhall know how innocent we are of the Rebellion with which you charge us.*

If we have ſet up an Altar in Oppoſition to the Lord's Altar, let him judge and puniſh us; neither do ye ſhew us any Favour. But when ye ſhall know the Truth, you will find what we have done was to prevent what you fear. For we conſidered, that in time to come, your Children might ſay unto our Children, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Iſrael?

For ſince the Lord hath made Jordan *a Border and Bound between us and you, you have no Part in the Lord: that is, you do not belong to the Congregation of the Lord, nor have any Right to come before his Tabernacle, nor to offer upon his Altar; and ſo your Children might be an Occaſion to our Children to turn Rebels to the Lord.*

Therefore we agreed to build an Altar, not for Burnt-Offering, nor for Sacrifice, but to be a Witneſs between you and us, and our Generations after us; that when we ſhould come to perform Sacrifice to the Lord with our Burnt-Offering and Sacrifice before him, if your Children ſhould ſay unto ours, Ye have no Part in the Lord; our Children might reply, Behold the Pattern of the Altar of the Lord, which our Fathers made, not to ſacrifice upon, but to be a Witneſs between us and you.

But as to the Matter you charge us with, God forbid that we ſhould rebel againſt the Lord, and turn this Day from following the Lord, to build an Altar for Burnt-Offerings, Meat-Offerings, or Sacrifices, beſides the Altar of our God, that is before his Tabernacle.

Phineas, and the Princes of the People that were with him, ſtruck with this juſt Vindication of the *Reubenites*, and the reſt, applauded them for it; and *Phineas* to teſtify his Senſe and Approbation of their Innocence, aſſured them that he eſteemed the Proof they had given of it as a Token of their Regard to God, and of his Preſence with them.

Then taking leave of their Brethren, they returned in Triumph to the *Iſraelites* at *Shiloh*, who with infinite Pleaſure and Joy received the good Tidings of their Brethrens Innocence, and of their pious Care and Zeal to preſerve their Poſterity in the Fear and Service of the true God. And changing their angry Thoughts of War, into thoſe of Tenderneſs and Peace, they bleſſed God for the happy Iſſue of this dangerous Affair. As for the *Reubenites* and their Brethren, to prevent any future Jealouſy or Suſpicion of their Intentions, they called the Altar which they had built *ED*, which ſignifies a Witneſs, adding this as the Reaſon of the Name, *For it ſhall be a Witneſs between us and our Brethren, the other Tribes of* Iſrael, *that the Lord is God.* Intimating by this, that tho' they lived at a Diſtance from the reſt of their Brethren, yet both had but one God, who was the God of *Iſrael*.

The great Warrior of *Iſrael* having obtained a compleat Victory over his Enemies, enjoyed the Fruits of his Labour in the agreeable Repoſe of a ſettled Peace; and at laſt being grown old, and foreſeeing his End to be near at hand, he cauſed all *Iſrael* to be aſſembled; to whom he thus briefly enumerated the Bleſſings God had beſtowed on their Anceſtors and themſelves,

ſelves, *Your Fathers dwelt on the other Side of* Jordan, *from whence the Lord brought* Abraham *his Servant to this happy Country, where he bleſſed his old Age with a Son, and that Son with two others,* Jacob *and* Eſau. Eſau *poſſeſſed Mount* Seir, *but* Jacob *and his Family went into* Egypt; *where their Poſterity remained under ſlaviſh Bondage, till God ſent* Moſes *and* Aaron *to deliver them. You cannot be ignorant of the Wonders God wrought by their Hands, when he plagued* Egypt *for their Sakes, nor of his Care in protecting them againſt the* Amorites. *Yourſelves have lately ſeen confederate Nations fall before you, and the Way to an eaſy Victory for you over all your Enemies. And now at laſt he hath left you in quiet Poſſeſſion of a Land that aboundeth with all Manner of Plenty, whoſe happy Soil, without your Labour, yields the comfortable Product of all that Nature can give. In Recompence for all this, your great Protector and Benefactor requires only an exact Obedience to his Laws.*

Then ſolemnly declaring, *That what Courſe ſoever the reſt ſhould take, he and his Houſe would* * *ſerve the Lord.* And exhorting them to a faithful Obſervance of the Laws of God, he invited them to renew their Covenant with God. Which having done in very ample and ſignificant Terms, he wrote the Words of the Covenant in the Book of the Law of God. Then ſetting up a great Stone under an Oak by the Sanctuary of the Lord, he bid the People take Notice, That that very Stone ſhould be a Witneſs to them, to put them in Mind of the Covenant which they had made, to prevent them hereafter from denying their God.

Soon after this, *Joſhua* being arrived at the hundred and tenth Year of his Age, died; and was buried in the Border of his Inheritance, in *Timnath-Sera,* in *Mount Ephraim*; which City upon the Diviſion of the Land amongſt the Tribes, the Children of *Iſrael* by God's Direction gave unto him, in Token of Gratitude for the many Services and Benefits they had received by his Adminiſtration.

Much about the ſame Time alſo died *Eleazer,* the Son of *Aaron,* the Prieſt, whom they buried in a Hill, which was given him in *Mount Ephraim,* and which deſcended to *Phineas* his Son, and Succeſſor in the Prieſthood.

The Children of *Iſrael* being obliged by Oath to carry *Joſeph*'s Bones into *Shechem,* and there bury them in a Parcel of Ground which *Jacob* had formerly bought of the Son of *Hamor,* the Father of *Shechem*; which Parcel of Ground afterwards became the Inheritance of *Joſeph's* Poſterity.

Joshua

* *Serve the Lord.* Joſeph puts *Iſrael* to their choice, whom they would ſerve, whether the Lord Jehovah, or the Idols of the Amorites where they dwelt: And, as a Leader in *Iſrael* and Pattern, he ſet before them his own Choice and the Strength of his Love to the Lord God of *Iſrael*; *as for him and his Houſe, they would ſerve the Lord*: A happy and honourable Reſolution, not only worthy to be followed by the Merit and Head of every Family, but it is their greateſt Honour and Privilege in Life.

CHAP. I.

Judah *and* Simeon *are continued by God, Succeſſors to* Joſhua *in the Conduct of the* Iſraelites. *Their Succeſs over their Enemies. They are rebuked by an Angel for their Neglect of the divine Command. Wickedneſs and Puniſhment of the ſucceeding Generation. Piety of* Micah, *in reſtoring the Money which his Mother had, through a miſtaken Zeal, devoted to the Lord.*

THE (*d*) *Iſraelites* mindful of the Advice of their deceaſed Leader, awarded by the dreadful Puniſhments that had been inflicted on the Diſobedience of their Fore-fathers, preſumed not to take any Step at this critical Juncture, without applying for the divine Inſtruction; therefore as there were ſtill remaining ſeveral *Canaanitiſh* Kings unconquered, and who might be troubleſome to them, they unanimouſly repaired to the Oracle at *Shiloh*, to aſk Direction, who ſhould go firſt up for them to fight the *Canaanites?*

The Lord gave this firſt Poſt of Honour to the Tribe of *Judah*, with an Aſſurance of Victory. Whereupon they invited the Tribe of *Simeon*, whoſe Lot lay within theirs, to accompany them in this Expedition; they promiſed them, if they would join Forces with them now, they would do the like for them afterwards.

Simeon agreed; and taking the Field they both attacked the cruel King of *Bezek*, who having fortified himſelf in the City, could not long hold out againſt victorious *Iſrael*: but ſeeing his heartleſs Troops give Way, quitted the Place and endeavour'd by ignoble Flight to ſave his Life, but in vain; for the *Iſraelites* having taken the Town, and put ten thouſand of the People to the Sword, they purſued *Adonibezek* the King; and having taken him, they cut off his Thumbs and great Toes.

This Execution drew from the Tyrant an Acknowledgment of the Juſtice of God upon him: for he confeſſed he had cut off the Thumbs and great Toes of no leſs than ſeventy Kings, whom, in this mangled Condition, he made to gather their Meat like Dogs under his Table.

The old City (*e*) *Jebus*, with its Territories, lay in two Parts; of which one Part fell to the Lot of *Judah*, the other to that of *Benjamin*.

(*d*) The *Iſraelites*. After the Death of *Joſhua*, the *Iſraelites* were long without any King or Sovereign. Every Tribe, being govern'd by its Elders, choſe its own Commanders for War, and they by Degrees ſubdued the reſt of the Inhabitants of the Country, either deſtroying or making them Tributaries.

The Neighbouring Kings made War on, and ſometimes ſubdued them; but God from Time to Time raiſed ſome Perſons, who delivered them from their Oppreſſions. In Acknowledgment for which Benefit the People appointed them their Judges, that is, their ſupreme *Magiſtrates*, to adminiſter Juſtice and govern them.

(*e*) *Jebus*. This City and its Territories had hitherto been poſſeſſed by the *Jebuſites*, who ſprung from *Jebuſi*, the third Son of *Canaan*. It is in *Judges*, called *Jeruſalem*, which Name it had long after the *Iſraelites* had ſacked and burnt it, it was rebuilt again, and afterwards made the Metropolis of the whole Kingdom.

Othniel

Judah ſoon over-run that Part of it that belonged to him; and having put the Inhabitants to the Sword, ſet the Place on Fire. Hither it was they brought the captive King *Adonibezek*, where he died.

The next March of the *Iſraelites* was againſt the *Canaanites* that dwelt to the Southward of the Mountains, and in the Plains; where having taken *Hebron*, they marched to attack *Debir*, which was a Part of *Caleb*'s Portion, but poſſeſſed by the *Canaanites*.

This being *Caleb*'s Property, notwithſtanding his great Age, he reſolved to ſtorm the Place; and to encourage his Men the more in this brave Attempt, he made Proclamation in his Camp, that he would give *Achſah* his Daughter to the brave Hero, who ſhould attack and take the Town.

The Hopes of this beautiful Prize raiſed in all the Youth a generous Emulation, and ſpurred them on to Love and Glory. But none came near the brave (*f*) *Othniel*, whoſe conquering Sword at the Head of his Party hewed down all before him, and paved the Way to Victory. In ſhort, he won the Place, and with it the fair Prize.

Othniel's Gallantry being thus nobly rewarded by *Caleb*, the beautuous *Achſah*, thinking herſelf not a ſufficient Gratuity for the Service of her valiant Hero, put him upon aſking of her Father a parcel of Land which lay commodiouſly by their Eſtate.

Othniel thinking his Service already over-paid, ſeemed backward in the Requeſt; therefore *Achſah* addreſſing herſelf to her Father *Caleb*, deſired him in general Terms to give her a Bleſſing, but more particularly ſhe thus applied to him, *Thou haſt already given me a pleaſant Eſtate in the South Part of the Country; but it is hot and dry, and likely to prove barren; give me I pray thee this Parcel of Land, which is well watered.* Upon which the generous Parent granted her Requeſt, giving her the upper and lower Springs.

Old *Caleb*, tho' advanced beyond his eighty-fifth Year, retained his Strengh and Power both of Body and Mind, purſued his Succeſs with undaunted Reſolution, and took *Hebron*, as has been already ſaid, with other Places, expelling the Gigantic Race of *Anak*; but the Inhabitants of the Valley kept their Ground, being a hardy People, and well provided with Ammunition, ſuch as Iron Chariots, &c.

Thoſe of *Joſeph*'s Family, who went up againſt *Bethel*, did by the Aſſiſtance of the Lord prevail; for ſending out Spies to diſcover the City, they ſeeing a Man come out of it, ſeized him, and promiſed him Mercy, if he would ſhew them the Avenues to it.

The Man, to ſave his Life, gave them the beſt Information he could; by which they ſo well ſucceeded, that having given Notice to the reſt of their Forces to join them, they entered the

(*f*) *Othniel.* He was ſomewhat of Kin to *Caleb*, being, as *Tremellius* and *Junius* ſay, of the Poſterity of *Kenaz*; from whom *Caleb* being deſcended, was therefore called the *Kenzite.*

Town, and put the Inhabitants to the Sword, except the Man who had diſcovered the Entrance, with his Family.

The reſt of the Tribes took Poſſeſſion of the Land reſpectively, and allotted them for an Inheritance, but did not deſtroy the Inhabitants, contenting themſelves with making them tributary, and ſuffering them to dwell promiſcuouſly amongſt them.

The Children of *Dan* were ſo unſucceſsful againſt the *Amorites*, that they were forced to quit the Plains, and retire to the mountainous Parts of the Country, where they were kept penned up for ſome Time.

But the reſt of the *Iſraelites*, who had been ſucceſsful againſt the *Canaanites* and *Amorites*, fell into a great Error; for, either thro' Lenity or Covetouſneſs, not making the right Uſe of their Victories, as they were expreſly commanded by God, they not only permitted them to live, but encouraged them to trade and deal with them.

This Diſobedience and Neglect of the divine Precept, not only proved a Snare to them, but likewiſe incenſed God againſt them, who to make them ſenſible of their Folly, ſent an Angel (*k*) to remind them of the many Favours he had beſtowed upon them, in their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, and of their being brought into that good Land, and of his Faithfulneſs in keeping his Covenant with them, which they had ſo unfaithfully violated; by which Ingratitude they had provoked God to withdraw his Help and Protection from them.

This ſevere Reprimand ſo ſtrongly impreſſed the People with a Senſe of their Sin, that they fell into a general Weeping, deplored the Wretchedneſs of their Condition, and offered Sacrifice to the Lord, to appeaſe his Wrath, calling the Name of the Place where they received this Reproof, *Bochim*, which ſignifies Weepers.

* But ſcarce were their Tears wiped off at *Bochim*, when they, forſaking the Lord God of their Fathers, fell into open Idolatry, worſhipping (*l*) *Baal* and *Aſhteroth*, the Idols of the Heathens; which ſo provoked the Lord, that he often ſuffered them to be taken and enſlaved by their Enemies.

But that which brought theſe Calamities upon them, was their favour-

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(*k*) Angel. That is, a *Meſſenger*, for ſo the Word implies.

* Mention was made in *Joſh.* xxiv. 31. that the people of *Iſrael ſerved the Lord all the Days of* Joſhua, *and all the Days of the Elders that out-lived* Joſhua, who had ſeen all the great Works of the Lord that he wrought for *Iſrael*. But when that Generation was dead and there aroſe another Generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the Works which he had done for *Iſrael*. The Children of *Iſrael* did Evil in the Sight of the Lord and ſerved *Baalim*, that is, the leſs, or Tutelar Gods, ſo called, of the ſeveral Nations about them.

(*l*) *Baal* and *Aſhteroth*. That is Idols or Gods of the Heathens: For by *Baal* or *Baalim*, were ſignified all the Male Gods, as the Females were by *Aſhteroth*, which was the Idol of the *Zidonians*, repreſented in the Form of a Sheep.

Inſpired,

ing thoſe Enemies with whom God had forbid all Manner of Correſpondence. For beſides, that it was expreſly forbidden in the Law, *Joſhua*, but juſt before his Death, had particularly warned them of the Danger they would fall into, if they ſhould entertain any Familiarity with thoſe Nations that God had doomed to Deſtruction.

And above all Things, he laid a moſt ſtrict Charge on them to take Care, that they did not marry with them, which he knew would naturally lead them to Idolatry. Yet, notwithſtanding they knew all this, they ſo far indulged themſelves in a looſe Converſation, with the *Canaanites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Amorites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebuzites*; that forgetting the Obligation they lay'd under, they made inter-marriages with them; the immediate Conſequence of which was, that they ſerved their Gods.

Such aggravated Offences ſo diſpleaſed the moſt high God, the mighty Deliverer of *Iſrael*, that he with-held his all powerful Aſſiſtance, and behold the Conſequence: For *Chuſhan-riſhathaim*, King of *Meſopotamia*, invading them, made an eaſy Conqueſt of them, and inſlaved them for eight Years. During which Time of Servitude, the *Iſraelites* coming to a Senſe and Acknowledgment of their Tranſgreſſions, and crying to the Lord for Help, he raiſed up a Deliverer for them. This was the brave *Othniel*, who, in Recompence of his Valour, had married *Caleb*'s Daughter. This Hero, being divinely (*p*) inſpired, undertook the Deliverance of the *Iſraelites*, defeated *Chuſhan-riſhathaim*, King of *Meſopotamia*; and by this Victory over the *Syrians*, procured to the *Iſraelites* a Peace of forty Years; during which Time *Othniel*, governed *Iſrael*, and was the firſt of thoſe we call Judges.

Plenty and Eaſe under the Adminiſtration of *Othniel*, rendered the Children of *Iſrael* ſecure and wanton, who ungratefully forgetting the former Favours and Benefits God had beſtowed upon them, lapſed into their former Sins of Apoſtaſy and Corruption in Religion; of which the following (*r*) Stories are notorious Inſtances.

There was about this time a devout Woman of the Tribe of *Dan*, who thro' a miſtaken Zeal had dedicated a Sum of Money to the Lord, and laid it by, intending her Son ſhould make with it an Idol. Her Son, whoſe Name was *Micah*, finding the Money, but not knowing to what Uſe his Mother had devoted it, took it for himſelf. She miſſing the Money, and not ſuſpecting her Son, did in his Preſence curſe the ſacrilegious Thief; which ſo frighted the Son, that he confeſſed

(*p*) Inſpired. All virtuous Qualities, whether natural, or ſupernatural, are in the Holy Scripture called the *Spirit of the Lord*. Thus *Bezaleel*, in *Exodus*, is ſaid to be *filled with the Spirit of God*, when he was appointed to build the Tabernacle. The ſame is ſaid of *Gideon*, *Samſon*, *Saul*, and others.

(*r*) Stories. It is plain from the Text, that theſe Things happened when *there was no King* (that is) *Ruler*; for, properly ſpeaking, there had been hitherto no King, *in* Iſrael; *but that every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes.*

Conſe-

the Fact, and reſtored it to her, being in all eleven hundred Skekels of Silver.

The Mother having received her Money again, took two hundred Shekels of it, and gave them to a Founder to make an Idol; which being done, ſhe placed it in the Houſe of her Son's God; for he made a *Teraphim* and an *Ephod*, and (*u*) conſecrated one of his Sons to be his Prieſt for a while, till he could procure a *Levite*, which was not long firſt: For ſoon after, a certain young Man, that was a *Levite*, and had dwelt ſome time at *Bethlehem-Judah*, travelling from thence to ſeek a better Settlement, came in his Way to *Micah*'s Houſe in Mount *Ephraim*.

Micah, glad of this Opportunity, invited the young *Levite* to dwell with him, and be to him a (*w*) Father and a Prieſt, offering him for his Wages ten Shekels of Silver by the Year, his Diet, and two Suits of Apparel, one for common wearing, and the other to officiate in.

The *Levite* liking the Terms, cloſed with *Micah*, and became one of his Family. On the other hand, *Micah*, was as much pleaſed in the Hopes and Confidence that the Lord would proſper him, becauſe he had gotten a (*x*) *Levite* to be his Prieſt.

CHAP. V.

The Danites *ſend out a Detachment in queſt of an Inheritance. They take Poſſeſſion of* Laiſh. *Are guilty of Idolatry. Judgment inflicted on the* Levite's *Concubine. Method of Reſentment ſhewn by the* Levite *for the Inhoſpitable Treatment he had received. He repreſents his wrongs in an aſſembly of the People. Their Decree in Conſequence of the ſame. The* Benjamites *are examined concerning the Outrage. Withſtand the* Iſraelites *ſome time, but are at length deſtroyed.*

ABOUT the ſame Time, ſome of the Tribe of *Dan* finding the Lot, which fell to them upon the Diviſion of the Land in (*y*) *Joſhua*'s Time, too little for them, and they not enjoying all that neither (for the *Amorites*, as has been already ſaid, would not ſuffer them to poſſeſs the Valley, which was the beſt and richeſt Part, but forced them up into the Mountains) they were fain to ſeek out

(*u*) Conſecrated. This was a great Abuſe, and imputable to the Licentiouſneſs of the Times when *every one did what ſeemed right in his own Eyes.*

(*w*) Father. The Prieſt was called a ſpiritual Father to the Laity, as having Care of their Souls, and Charge of the Holy Things. Thus are Preceptors called Fathers to their Pupils, Senators Fathers to the Citizens, Princes Fathers of their Countries, &c.

(*x*) *Levite*. Who this young *Levite* was, is hard to ſay. He is called *Jonathan*, the Son of *Gerſhom*, of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*.

(*y*) *Joſhua*'s. See *Joſh.* xix. 47.

Jebus.

more Room to enlarge their Quarters. Whereupon, chuſing out five Men of Courage, they ſent them to take a View of the Country. Theſe Spies in their Travels came to *Micah*'s Houſe, where they were entertained; and knowing the young *Levite* by his Voice, they aſked him How he came thither, and what Buſineſs he had there?

He told them what Agreement *Micah* had made with him, and that he was *Micah*'s Prieſt.

When they heard this, they deſir'd him to aſk Counſel of God, that they might know whether their Journey would be proſperous or no?

With this Encouragement they went on, till they came to *Laiſh*; where, obſerving the People lived very ſecure and careleſs, without any Sort of Diſcipline or Government, they concluded it would be no difficult Matter to conquer them, and take Poſſeſſion of the Place. And with this Report they returned to their Friends, giving them an Account that the Land abounded with all Neceſſaries for Life.

Availing themſelves of the undiſciplined State of theſe People, the Tribe of *Dan* armed a Party of ſix hundred Men, and ſent them to take Poſſeſſion of the City of *Laiſh*.

Theſe marching thro' Mount *Ephraim*, came in their Way to *Micah*'s Houſe; where, making a Halt, the five Spies, who were Guides to this Party, and had been there before, acquainted the reſt, that there were in that Houſe an *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and a graven and molten Image, deſiring them to conſider, Whether they had beſt tarry there, to aſk Counſel of the Lord, concerning the Succeſs of their Enterprize, or take the *Ephod* and Images with them, to conſult upon all Occaſions?

The laſt ſeemed moſt expedient; for the five Spies, that were the Guides, leaving the Party at the Gates, went into the Houſe. *Micah* being from Home, they ſaluted the *Levite*, whom they ſent to the Gate to talk with the *Danites*; and whilſt they entertained him without, the Guides, having been there before, and knowing the Rooms the Houſe, plundered it of the *Ephod*, the *Teraphim*, and other Images, and brought them to their Brethren at the Gate.

The Prieſt ſeeing this, was amazed at the Boldneſs of the Attempt; and aſked them, What they meant by it? They bid him be ſilent, and conſider, whether it were better for him to be a Prieſt to a ſingle Family, or a whole Tribe in *Iſrael*?

This advantageous Offer ſoon gained the young Prieſt to their Side, who joined with them, and went off with the Plunder.

Micah incenſed and alarmed at the Loſs of his Prieſt and Gods, gathered as many Friends as he could, and purſued the *Danites*. But they were a long Way from his Houſe before he could overtake them: at length, coming within View of them, ſome of the *Danite* Soldiers in the Rear heard them make an Out-cry; and facing about, aſked *Micah* why he made ſuch an Outcry. He told them they had robbed him. Upon which the *Danites* adviſed him to be ſilent; for if they provoked the reſt of the Party, it would coſt them their Lives. *Micah*

cah finding himſelf over-match'd, was forced to put up the Wrong, and returned Home without either Gods or Prieſt.

Having thus affrighted *Micah's* Party from the Purſuit, the *Danites* continued their March unmoleſted, and ſpeedily arrived at *Laiſh*, and finding the People quiet and ſecure, they ſet the City on Fire, and ſurpriſing the Inhabitants, who were buſy in putting out the Fire, they put them all to the Sword. Afterwards, rebuilding the City, they call'd it *Dan*, after the Name of their Father; and ſettling there, they ſet up *Micah's* graven Image which they had ſtolen from him; and making the young *Levite Jonathan* their Prieſt, he and his Sons continued to officiate as Prieſts to the Tribe of *Dan* all the Time that the Houſe of God was in *Shiloh*, untill the Captivity of the Land, which is reckoned to be till the Ark in *Eli's* Time was taken by the *Philiſtines*, about three hundred Years after this.

From this Inſtance, the Depravity of the *Iſraelites* in Point of religious Principles, is as notorious as their Diſolution of Morals, is evident from the following.

A Levite that dwelt on the Side of Mount *Ephraim* having taken a Wife out of *Bethlehem-Judah*, ſhe proved a lewd Woman, and either through Fear or Shame left her Husband, and ran home to her Father at *Bethlehem Judah*, where ſhe tarried four Months. In which Time her Huſband having ſomewhat digeſted the Injury, went at the four Months End to her Father's, with an Intent to be reconciled to her, and bring her Home with him; in order to which he took with him a Servant and a couple of Aſſes.

Being arrived at her Father's Houſe, he was received with great Joy, and entertained for three Days. At the Importunity of the Father, he ſtay'd the fourth Day, and was kept till the Afternoon the next Day; but the *Levite* reſolving to be gone, took his Leave, and ſet out with his Wife and Servant.

By the Time they were got as far as *Jebus*, the Day was far ſpent, and the Servant fearing to be benighted, deſired his Maſter to put in there. But the Place not being fully poſſeſſed and inhabited by *Iſraelites*, he endeavoured to reach *Gibeah*, whither they arrived at Sun-ſet; and ſitting down in the Street, as the Cuſtom of Travellers then was, they waited to ſee who would invite them to a Lodging.

After long waiting, an old Man coming from his Work out of the Field, and ſeeing Strangers ſitting in the Street, went up and ſaluted them, aſked whence they came, and whither they were travelling? The *Levites* told him, and complained of the Incivility of the People, none having invited him to a Lodging, though he had his own Proviſions with him.

The hoſpitable old Man, who was of Mount *Ephraim*, though he dwelt at *Gibeah*, courteouſly invited them to lodge in his Houſe, where he entertained them very frankly.

Whilſt they were at Supper, the Men of the City, having obſerved they went in, came to the Houſe, and knocking with great Violence at the Door, demanding the Maſter of the Houſe

Houſe to deliver the Man that came in there, that they might (*c*) know him.

The good old Man, to prevent Danger to his Gueſts, ventured amongſt the tumultuous Rabble to appeaſe them, offering them his only Daughter, who was a Virgin, and the *Levites* Concubine, to uſe at their Pleaſure, provided they would not offer any Violence to his Gueſt.

This would not do; whereupon the *Levite*, ſeeing them ſo outrageous, to ſave himſelf, turned his (*d*) Concubine out amongſt them, who abuſed her all Night, not letting her go till the Break of Day. And when ſhe returned to the Houſe where her Lord lay, fell down dead at the Door, her Hands laying upon the Threſhold.

The *Levite* opening the Door, and ſeeing her lay there, concluded ſhe was aſleep, and therefore bid her get up, that they might be going. But when he perceived ſhe was dead, he took her up; and making no Complaint there, laid her upon one of the Aſſes, and haſtened Home as faſt as he could.

He having now Time to meditate a Revenge ſuitable to the Affront, which he in this horrid Manner expreſſed; he divided the dead Concubine into twelve Pieces, and ſent to every Tribe a Piece, through the whole Coaſts of *Iſrael*, with an Account of the barbarous and inhoſpitable Treatment he had met with at *Gibeah*; that ſo the whole Family of *Iſrael* in general, being made ſenſible of the Wrong done him, and his Concubine, might join in revenging it.

This Proceedure of the *Levite* is indeed ſhocking to Humanity, tho' it tended to ſhew his ſtrong Senſe of the Injury and Diſgrace he had ſuſtained, as well as impreſs deep Convictions of their Guilt upon the *Iſraelites*, who upon Sight of each Piece of the divided Concubine, did unanimouſly agree, That there never was ſuch a Deed done or ſeen ſince the Day that the Children of *Iſrael* came out of *Egypt*.

And to acquit themſelves of the Guilt of ſo wicked a Fact, the whole Congregation of *Iſrael* met at *Miſpeh*, that they might there examine the Buſineſs before the Lord; where demanding of the *Levite* an Account of the whole Matter, he thus in ſhort ſummed it up to them. *I came with my Concubine to* Gibeah, *which belonged to* Benjamin, *to lodge: But the Men of* Gibeah *beſet the Houſe where I was, with a Deſign to murder me; and my Concubine they have forced, that ſhe is dead; by which they have committed Lewdneſs and Folly in* Iſrael.

Whereupon I took my Concubine Home, and having cut her into Pieces, I ſent her throughout all the Inheritance of Iſrael.

Now ye, being Sons of Iſrael, *are*

(*c*) Know him. Juſt as the *Sodomites* offered to *Lot*, demanding to have the *Levite* delivered to them, that they might abuſe him in that unnatural Way, called Sodomy.

(*d*) Concubine. She is ſometimes called Wife, but oftener Concubine.

concerned in this Abuſe as well as I. Therefore conſider, and adviſe what is to be done.

When the People had received this Account of the Matter, they were highly incenſed againſt the Men of *Gibeah*, and reſolved not to return to their Houſes till they had brought the Offenders to condign Puniſhment. And that they might loſe no Time, agreed to draw ten Men out of every hundred, an hundred out of every thouſand, and a thouſand out of every ten thouſand, who ſhould be employed to furniſh the Army with Proviſions, and other Neceſſaries.

On cool Deliberation it was reſolved by Meſſengers, to demand of the *Benjamites* the Delivery of the Perſons guilty of this Breach of Juſtice, in order that they might be brought to condign Puniſhment.

But the *Benjamites* in Contempt of their Brethren, the *Iſraelites*, reſolved to ſtand by the Offenders, and muſter'd up all their Force to defend them.

The *Iſraelitiſh* Army conſiſted of four hundred thouſand able Men: that of *Benjamin* but ſix and twenty thouſand. A great Diſparity, and which ſhewed the latter deſperate.

The *Iſraelites* over-confident of their Strength, and deſpiſing the *Benjamites*, who were ſo few, depending on the Juſtice of their Cauſe, never went to ask Counſel of God (as in ſuch Emergencies they uſually did) whether they ſhould go to War with their Brethren or no; but taking for granted their right, to prevent any Difference that might ariſe among the Tribes about Precedence in this Expedition, they went up to the Houſe of God only to know which Tribe ſhould lead the Van, and the Lot fell to *Judah*.

Upon this, the *Iſraelitiſh* Army advanced, and ſat down before *Gibeah*; from whence the *Benjamites* made a brick Sally upon, cut off two and twenty thouſand of them, and retreated to the Town with very little Loſs. This unexpected Diſaſter made the *Iſraelites* ſenſible of their Neglect, in not enquiring of the Lord whether they ought have undertaken this War, or no. Wherefore, bewailing their Misfortune in the laſt Action, they aſk Counſel of the Lord (but in an irregular Manner) who, to puniſh them for their Preſumption, bid them go, but promiſed them no Succeſs.

The heedleſs *Iſrealites*, taking this for an Aſſurance of Victory, drew up their Army again before *Gibeah*, offering the *Benjamites* Battle: who being fluſh'd with their former Succeſs made another bold Sally, and cut off eighteen thouſand more of the *Iſrealites*.

The ſecond Defeat brought the *Iſraelites* to a Senſe of their former Preſumption and Neglect: Wherefore, going up to the Houſe of the Lord, they humbled themſelves with Weeping and Faſting that Day, and offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings before the Lord.

And having thus regularly proceeded in their Humiliation, they again enquired of the Lord whether they ſhould

ſhould attack the *Benjamites*, or forbear; for, at this Time the Ark of the Covenant of God was in *Shiloh*, and (*c*) *Phineas* was Prieſt. And now the Lord, having ſufficiently corrected the Confidence of the *Iſraelites*, not only gave them Commiſſion to go againſt the *Benjamites*, but aſſured them of Victory.

Being thus promiſed the Aſſiſtance of an Almighty Arm, and encouraged with the divine Aſſurance of Succeſs, the *Iſraelites* prepared a third Time to attack the *Benjamites*; and to make their Victory more ſecure, they laid an Ambuſcade in the Meadows behind *Gibeah*, that when the Fight was begun, the *Iſraelites* by a feigned Flight drawing the *Benjamites* from the City, thoſe that lay in Ambuſcade ſhould ſeize the City, and ſet it on Fire, as a Signal to the main Body of the *Iſraelitiſh* Army to rally and renew the Fight.

Having thus concerted the neceſſary military Operations, ten thouſand choiſe Troops of the *Iſraelites* appeared before *Gibeah*; which the *Benjamites* ſeeing, ſallyed out of the Town, and ſallying briſkly upon them, killed about thirty of them. The *Iſraelites* then retiring, as if they were afraid, pretended to fly; and the *Benjamites* ſuppoſing the Day was their own, eagarly purſuing them ſo far, that they were at a Diſtance from the Town ſufficient to give the Ambuſcade an Opportunity to ſeize the Place, and ſet it on Fire. The main Body of the *Iſraelitiſh* Army ſeeing this, faced about, and charged furiouſly upon the *Benjamites*, who began to think of retreating to their City; but when by the Smoak and Flame they ſaw themſelves circumvented, they took to the Wilderneſs, thinking to ſcreen themſelves there; but in vain: for being incloſed by the main Army, and the Ambuſcade, they were eaſily trodden down.

In this Action and the Purſuit, five and twenty thouſand one hundred of the *Benjamites* were ſlain; and a thouſand more having been deſtroyed in other Actions, there remained but ſix hundred Men of the *Benjamites*, who fled to the Rock *Rimmon*, and hid themſelves there; all the reſt of that Tribe, together with their Towns and Cattle, ſuffered Military Execution.

The Heat of this Action being over, the *Iſraelites* began to conſider, how low a Condition they had reduced the Tribe of *Benjamin* to by this general Slaughter, which afflicted them very much. And the rather, becauſe upon the firſt engaging in this Quarrel, they had raſhy ſworn, that no *Iſraelite* ſhould give his Daughter in Marriage to a *Benjamite*.

Upon this they repaired to the Tabernacle where the Ark was, and mourned all Day, ſaying, *O Lord, why is this come to paſs, that there*

(*c*) *Phinea.* This Paſſage in *Judges* (rejecting that *Rabbinical* Dream, that *Phineas* lived three hundred Years) ſhews plainly, that this Story was tranſacted early in the times of the Judges.

ſhould this Day be one Tribe wanting in Iſrael?

Then getting up early the next Morning, they built an Altar there, and offered Burnt-offerings and Peace-offerings unto the Lord. After which, applying themſelves to find out ſome Expedient to elude their raſh Oath and ſave the ſinking Tribe, they recollected, that they had at firſt bound themſelves by Oath to put to Death all thoſe who ſhould not appear with them at *Mizpeth*, and join in the common Cauſe againſt the *Benjamites*.

Upon Enquiry they found, that none came from *Jabeſh Gilead* to the Aſſembly of the Camp. Therefore ſending twelve thouſand of their beſt Men to *Jabeſh-Gilead*, they commanded them to put Man, Woman and Child to the Sword, except ſuch marriageable young Women as were Virgins, whom they were to bring with them to the Camp.

Theſe Troops, having done Execution on *Jabiſh-Gilead*, as they were commanded, brought away with them four hundred Virgins to the *Iſraelites*; who immediately ſent Heralds to the Rock *Rimmon* to treat with the few remaining *Benjamites*, offering them Peace, and inviting them to return.

The poor *Benjamites* gladly embraced the Offer; and coming to the Camp, the *Iſraelites* beſtowed on them the *Gileadite* Virgins for Wives. But the *Benjamites*, being ſix hundred in Number, there was not for every Man one. Upon which they bethought them of another Expedient to ſupply this Deficiency.

One a Year there was a ſolemn Feaſt held at *Shiloh*, to which the young Maidens of *Shiloh* uſed to come and dance there. The *Iſraelites* therefore directed the *Benjamites*, that wanted Wives, to lie in wait in the Vineyards, at the Time of the Feaſt, and when they ſhould ſee the *Shiloh* Damſels come to dance, they ſhould ſeize every Man one for his Wife, and carry them away into their own Country; promiſing them, that if any of the Relations of the Damſels ſhould complain, they would ſcreen them from Danger.

The *Benjamites* purſued their Inſtructions; and watching their Opportunity, took every one his Damſel, and carried them off to their own Inheritance; where, repairing their Cities, they ſettled again, and in Time recruited their Tribe.

CHAP. VI.

The Iſraelites *are again puniſhed for their Impiety. Delivered from their Enemies on their Repentance and Submiſſion.* Deborah *and* Barak *eſpouſe their Cauſe. Various Inſtances of the Revolt of* Iſrael, *and their conſequent Puniſhment. Together with the Interpoſition of Providence in their Behalf, on their Return to the Lord.*

THESE civil and inteſtine Quarels among the Tribes, being thus reconciled, the *Iſraelites* did not long enjoy Peace; for continuing to provoke God by their Profaneneſs

neſs and Irregularities, he again chaſtiſed them by their Enemies. The moſt powerful of whom was *Eglon*, King of *Moab*. Him God raiſed up to be a Scourge, who otherwiſe had neither Strength nor Courage to attack *Iſrael*.

But being deſigned by the Almighty to be the Inſtrument of his Vengeance. *Eglon* armed the *Ammonites* and *Amalekites*, and fell upon the *Iſraelites*, whom he defeated, and poſſeſſed himſelf of the City of Palm-trees.

And as an Aggravation of their Offence, in ſo ſuddenly tranſgreſſing, after their late Deliverance from Bondage, God enlarged their Puniſhment, for their Servitude was now advanced from eight Years to eighteen, which was the Space of Time they ſerved *Moab*.

But when the *Iſraelites*, through a Senſe of their Miſery, addreſſed themſelves to their God, he raiſed them another Deliverer in the Perſon of *Ehud*, the Son of *Gera*, a left-handed Man, by reaſon of a Lameneſs in his right Hand.

Ehud was a wiſe and politic Man, and having obſerved the Weakneſs of the *Iſraelites* by their eighteen Years Slavery, and the low Condition of the *Benjamites*, that they were not able by open War to attempt any thing againſt their Oppreſſors, he contrived firſt to take off *Eglon* privately, knowing it would be much eaſier to deal with the *Moabites*, when they ſhould be in Confuſion for Want of a Leader, than while they had their King at the Head of them.

To carry on this the more plauſibly, he repaired to the *Moabitiſh* Court, where, under Pretence of delivering a Preſent to the King from his Servants the Children of *Iſrael*, he was admited into the King's Preſence. When he had delivered the Preſent, and diſmiſſed his Servants that brought it, he returning to the King told him he had a private Meſſage to him.

The King bid him be ſilent till the Company were gone; who being withdrawn, *Ehud* approached, and told the King, he had a Meſſage to him from *(f)* God.

At that Word *Eglon*, in Reverence to the Name of God, aroſe from his Seat, which *Ehud* taking the Advantage of, ſtabbed him in the Belly with a Dagger, which he had concealed under his Cloaths, ſo forcibly, that he thruſt the Dagger, Haft and all, into his Belly; and the King being a very fat Man, the Fat of his Belly cloſed over the Dagger, ſo that he could not draw it out.

Ehud ſeeing him dead left him wallowing in his Blood, and ſhutting the Door after him made the beſt of his way Home.

After the Departure of *Ehud*, the Servants of *Eglon* returned on their

(*f*) God. Thus was *Ehud*'s Commiſſion from God to diſpatch *Eglon*, and therefore is not to be drawn into an Example by any; for in the Text he is called a Saviour of the Children of *Iſrael*, raiſed up by God himſelf.

Duty to the King, but finding the Door lock'd they ſuppoſed he had a Mind to retire, and therefore withdrew; but after long waiting, and finding the Door ſtill ſhut, they took a Key and opened it, and to their great Surprize found their King dead upon the Ground.

This long Delay of theirs gave *Ehud* a fair Opportunity to eſcape; which he improved by his Speed; and coming to Mount *Ephraim*, he blew a Trumpet, at which Signal the *Iſraelites* flock'd to him, to whom he related what he had done, and bid them follow him; for God (ſaid he) hath delivered your Enemies the *Moabites* into your Hands.

They readily obeyed him as their Leader, and ſecuring the Fords of *Moab* towards *Jordan*, ſuffer'd not a Man to paſs over; but falling courageouſly upon the *Moabites*, whilſt they were in that Conſternation for the Death of their King, and Want of a Leader; they ſlew about ten Thouſand of the chief of them, at the ſame time delivering *Iſrael*, and ſubduing *Moab*.

Ehud deceaſed, the God of *Iſrael*, raiſed his choſen People another deliverer, in the Perſon of *Shamgar*, the Son of *Anath*, a ſtrong and valiant Man; who, when the *Philiſtines* in another Quarter invaded *Iſrael*, with no better Weapon than an Ox goad, ſlew ſix hundred of the *Philiſtines*, and delivered them from all dangerous Neighbours, that were Borderers on that Side. After which *Iſrael* enjoyed a Peace of eight years.

In which time of Liberty and Eaſe, they grew wanton and forgetful of their former Servitude; which Neglect and Ingratitude of theirs provoked God to raiſe up other Inſtruments for their Correction; the chief of which was *Jabin*, who aſſuming to himſelf the Title of the King of *Canaan* reign'd in *Hazor*.

He was a powerful Prince, well ſtor'd with all warlike Ammunition, having nine hundred Chariots arm'd with Iron, and his Subjects a warlike People.

This King lorded it over the oppreſſed *Iſraelites* with great Severity for twenty Years; God upon the Repetition and Aggravation of their Tranſgreſſions increaſing their Puniſhment. And ſo cruel were the People to them, that they durſt not travel the common Roads upon their ordinary Occaſions, but were forced to ſeek By-ways to avoid their Enemies, ſo that their Highways were diſuſed: Neither could they in Safety dwell in their Villages, being attacked by their Archers, if they went but out to draw Water; nay, ſo ſervile was their Condition, that they were not ſuffered to keep any Arms.

Having been thus ſeverely puniſhed for their Tranſgreſſions by a Subjection to their cruel and inveterate Foes, God was pleaſed at laſt to remember Mercy; and ſeeing their Sufferings had brought them to a Senſe of their Sins, he found out a Way to deliver them, beyond what they could imagine or expect. For it is very much to be ſuſpected, that at this Time the *Iſraelites*, by the Severity

Severity of their Servitude, were ſo degenerated and diſpirited, that the Sex, which boaſts itſelf created for Empire, could not at that Time furniſh their preſent Exigencies with a Man fit to be inveſted with ſovereign Power. For which Reaſon, in all Probability, *Deborah* the Wife of *Lapidoth*, is ſaid to have judged *Iſrael* at that Time.

She was a Propheteſs, and the *Iſraelites* uſed to come to her for Judgment. To this great Propheteſs the Lord communicated his Thoughts of delivering his People, and by his Spirit directed her to ſend for *Barak*, the Son of *Abinoam*, a brave young Prince of the Tribe of *Naphtali*.

He came, and ſhe acquainted him, that it was the Pleaſure of the Lord, that he ſhould get together ten thouſand Men of the Tribes of *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, and lead them towards Mount *Tabor*; and, to encourage him, ſhe told him in the Name of the Lord, that *Siſera*, General of *Jabin's* Army, with his Army and Chariots, ſhould fall into his Hands.

Barak conſidering the Inequality of their Forces, and the Greatneſs of the Enterprize, and thinking it neceſſary to have the Propheteſs with him, to conſult upon all Occaſions, as well as to encourage his Men, told her, If ſhe would go with him, he would go; but not elſe.

The undaunted Propheteſs conſented to accompany him; but pleaſantly told him for his Diffidence, that this Expedition ſhould not be for his Honour; for *Siſera* the General ſhould fall into the Hands of a Woman.

Departing together for *Kadeſh*, which was *Barak*'s Reſidence, he ſoon liſted ten thouſand Volunteers in *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, and led them to Mount *Tabor*, the Propheteſs ſtill accompanying him.

Such a Number of diſtreſſed People being got together, it ſoon began to be rumoured about the Country; and Notice being given to *Siſera* of this Inſurrection, he muſtered up all his Force to ſuppreſs them, taking with him his nine hundred Chariots of Iron, and down he marched to the River *Kiſhon*. Which the courageous *Deborah* ſeeing, being divinely inſpired, gave the Signal to the Battle; ſaying to *Barak*, *Up, for this is the Day, in which the Lord hath delivered* Siſera *into thine Hand.*

Barak upon this marched down the Mountain *Tabor*, and fell upon *Siſera*, in the Valley by the River; whoſe Army God ſtruck with ſuch Terror, by driving Storms of Rain and Hail in their Faces, that they could not ſtand before the *Iſraelites*: who purſuing them, put them all to the Sword, except the General *Siſera*, who, not daring to truſt to his Chariot, took to his Heels, and fled, till he came to the Tent of *Jael*, the Wife of *Heber* the (*l*) *Kenite*, who

(*l*) *Kenite.* Theſe *Kenites*, though they were Proſelytes, and worſhipped the true God, according to the *Moſaic* Law, yet being ſtrangers by Birth, and not of the promiſed Seed, and

dwelt in that Country, which was at Peace with King *Jabin*.

Jael seeing *Sisera* coming, went out to meet him, and invited him to come in. He glad of the Opportunity, went in confidently, not suspecting any Danger from her, whose Husband was his Master's Ally.

But his Security proved fatal to him, for being extremely thirsty, through the Heat and Fatigue of the Day, he intreated *Jael* to give him a little Water to drink; instead of which, she gave him as much Milk as he cared for: and having allay'd his Thirst, he directed her, That if any body should come to enquire after him, she should not own he was there. And now thinking himself safe, he laid him down upon the Floor to sleep, *Jael* very officiously covered him with a Carpet: where he had not lay'd long, before he fell fast asleep.

When *Jael* perceived he was thus secure, she took a Hammer, and a long Nail, or Tent-pin, and pitching it to the Temples of his Head, she struck it with such Force, that it pierced through his Head, and pinned him to the Ground: after which she cut off his Head, and then left him.

After this, she went to the Door of the Tent, and saw *Barak* coming in pursuit of *Sisera*, whom she went out to meet, and inviting him in, told him, she could shew him the Man he sought for; which she accordingly did.

Thus did the Almighty exert his Power, in Defence of his People *Israel*, and caused them to subdue *Jabin*, King of *Canaan*, whom they never left fighting with, till they had quite destroyed him.

Upon this Victory the Heroine *Deborah*, and her valliant General *Barak*, sung a triumphant * Song.

CHAP VII.

A Famine rages in Israel. *Many depart into a foreign Land. Peculiar Circumstances of* Naomi *and* Ruth. *The* Israelites *after the Death of* Deborah *and* Barak *revolt from God, but on their Return, Gideon is raised as a Deliverer.*

PEACE and Quiet at length succeeded War and Tumults. But the *Israelites* growing supine, by an Alteration of their Circumstances, again provoke their God, by falling into their former Transgressions, he took them more immediately into his own Hands, and chastised their Presumption and Ingratitude with a severe Famine; which raging furiously among the *Israelites*, many of

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and so not pretending a Right or Title to the Land of *Canaan*, they held it best Policy, in those troublesome Times, to observe a Neutrality, and maintain Peace as well as they could both with the *Israelites* and *Canaanites*.

Upon this Foot it was that there was a Peace between K. *Jabin* and the House of *Heber* the *Kenite*; and that gave Confidence to *Sisera* in his Distress to fly to *Heber*'s Tent for Protection.

* See *Judges* chap. v.

Jael killeth Sisera. *Judges 5. 26.*

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them were forced to quit their Habitations, and ſeek for Food in a foreign Land.

Among the reſt, one *Elimelech* of *Bethlehem-Judah*, a Man of Condition and Family, removed with his Wife *Naomi*, and his two Sons *Mahlon* and *Chilion*, to the Country of *Moab*, where *Elimelech* ſoon quited this Life.

After his Death, his two Sons, not ſtrictly obſerving the Law of God, took each of them a Wife of the Women of *Moab*, of baſe Condition. The Name of *Chilion*'s Wife was *Orphah*, and the Name of *Mahlon*'s *Ruth*. With theſe they lived about ten Years, when *Chilion* and *Mahlon* died both Childleſs.

The unhappy *Naomi*, thus deprived of her Huſband and Children, and left in a ſtrange Country, could with no Satisfaction ſtay longer in a Place, where ſhe had loſt all the external Comforts of Life. But being informed that the Famine was over in *Iſrael*, ſhe reſolved to return to her own Country; and accordingly ſet forward for *Judah*, accompanied with her two Daughters-in-Law.

In the Courſe of their Journey, *Naomi*, thinking it hard to deprive her Daughters of the Society and Converſe of their Relatives, perſuaded them to go back, and to ſhew that her Advice aroſe not from any Diſguſt, but from mere Pity; gave them this affectionate Bleſſing; *The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have done to me and mine; and grant that ye may marry again to your Content, and enjoy a happy Settlement.*

Then giving to each a parting Kiſs, they in Tears preſſed her to accept of their Company. She endeavoured to diſſuade them, by urging, That if they ſtay'd in their own Country they might marry again, which they could not propoſe, if they went with her.

At laſt, her Importunity prevailed with *Orphah*, who with Tears taking her Leave of her Mother-in-Law, turned back to *Moab*. But no perſuaſion could prevail with *Ruth*, who with the moſt preſſing Inſtances urged *Naomi* to take her along with her; aſſuring her, that nothing ſhould part them, but that the God ſhe ſerved ſhould be her God.

Naomi ſeeing the pious Reſolution of her Daughter *Ruth*, preſſed her no more to return, but they both went on to *Bethlehem*.

Naomi being arrived at *Bethlehem*, where ſhe had lived in good Repute; her Return was generally taken Notice of, and her old Neighbours came to congratulate her upon her arrival in her own Country.

It was now the beginning of Barley-Harveſt (which uſually was in the firſt Month with them) when *Naomi* returned to *Bethlehem*. And *Ruth* the *Moabitiſs* being an induſtrious Woman, deſired *Naomi* to give her Leave to go into the Field to glean ſome Corn. The Mother conſented, and ſhe happened to go into a Field belonging to *Boaz*, a very wealthy Perſon of the Family of *Elimelech*, and nearly related to him; and there ſhe gleaned after the Reapers. She had not been long there, before *Boaz* himſelf came into the Field to look

look after his Workmen; and having ſaluted them in a very devout manner, he took notice of *Ruth*, and asked his Steward who ſhe was? He told him, ſhe was a *Moabitiſh* Damſel that accompanied *Naomi* in her Return Home from the Country of *Moab*, and that ſhe had ask'd Leave to glean after the Reapers.

Boaz, having been acquainted with her dutiful and affectionate Behaviour to her Mother-in-law, his Kinſwoman, encourag'd her to glean in his Ground, and to keep with his Servants, and fare as they did; and charged them not to moleſt her. *Ruth* ſurprized at this unexpected Civility of a Stranger, returned her Thanks in a moſt profound Reſpect and Acknowledgment of his Courteſy.

Boaz told her he had heard of her affectionate Carriage to her Mother-in-law, and that ſhe was come with her into a ſtrange Country, out of a pious Deſign, to be under the Care and Protection of the God of *Iſrael*; whom he ſolemnly prayed to recompenſe her good Actions, and give her a full Reward.

After this he treated her at his own Board very liberally; and when his Servants returned to their Work in the Field, he charged them to be civil to her, and to give her Opportunity of gleaning the more, by dropping ſome of the Sheaves. Thus *Ruth* continued gleaning among *Boaz's* Servants till the Barley and Wheat Harveſt were over, dwelling ſtill with *Naomi*, to whom ſhe returned every Evening with what ſhe had gleaned, and acquainted her with the great Humanity of *Boaz*.

Naomi ſtudious to recompenſe this tender Affection of her Daughter-in-Law, prejected how ſhe might engage her Kinſman *Boaz* to marry *Ruth*, whoſe Civility ſhe might reaſonable imagine proceeded from ſome other Motive than that of common Courteſy or Humanity.

Therefore acquainting *Ruth*, that *Boaz* was her near Kinſman, and informing her what the Law of *Moſes* required in that Caſe, ſhe adviſed her to waſh and anoint, and dreſs herſelf, and go to *Boaz's* Barn, where he was winnowing his Barley; but not to let it be known ſhe was there, till he had ſupped, and was gone to reſt, giving her Inſtructions what ſhe ſhould do farther.

Ruth, purſuant to the Advice of her Mother, ſet herſelf forth to the beſt Advantage, went to the Barn and placed herſelf ſo conveniently, that ſhe could ſee what paſſed, without being noticed.

When *Boaz* had refreſhed himſelf, he lay down at the End of a Heap of Corn; and *Ruth* waiting till he was aſleep, came ſoftly, and lifting up the Clothes undiſcovered, laid herſelf down at his Feet.

Boaz waking about Midnight, in a Fright, aſked Who ſhe was? To which ſhe anſwered, *I am* Ruth *thy Servant*; (o) *Spread therefore the*

(o) Spread. This was as if ſhe had ſaid, Take me to Wife as the Law directs: For the Phraſe of Spreading the Skirt or Wing over one, imports taking ſuch a one into Protection. And

Wing of thy Garment over me, for thou art a near Kinſman.

Boaz, though advanced in Years, was ſo far from rejecting her, that he commended her Forwardneſs; and being a virtuous Man, told her, She had ſhewn more Piety to her dead Husband, than when he was alive, in raiſing up Iſſue to his Name, by marrying her Kinſman, and that her Virtue was conſpicuous in not following young Men, whether poor or rich. Therefore he aſſured her, he would not fail to anſwer her Deſire, and his Duty; which he had the greater Inducement to do, becauſe ſhe had the general Reputation of a virtuous Wife. But at the ſame Time told her, that though he indeed was a near Kinſman, yet there was another nearer, to whom he muſt give the Preference, becauſe it was his Right; and that he would communicate the Matter to him next Morning; and if that Kinſman would marry her, he might, otherwiſe he himſelf would aſſuredly marry her.

To obviate any Reflection that might be caſt on her Character or Religion, ſhe aroſe early in the Morning and departed; but that ſhe might not go Home empty-handed to her Mother, *Boaz* gave her ſix Meaſures of Barley; with which *Ruth* returned to her Mother, who received her joyfully, both for the Preſent of *Boaz* and his kind Treatment of her Daughter, whom ſhe adviſed to take no Notice to any of what had paſſed, but patiently to wait the Event; aſſuring her that *Boaz* was a Man of Honour, and would perform his Promiſe.

Boaz, punctual in the Performance of his Word, appeared that Morning at the Gate of the City, which was in thoſe Days the uſual Place of Judicature. There he met with the Kinſman he had mentioned to *Ruth*; and ſummoning ten more of the Chief of the City, he, in their Preſence, acquainted him, That *Naomi*, who was come back from the Country of *Moab*, had a Parcel of Land to diſpoſe of, which belonged formerly to *Elimelech*, of which he gave him this public Notice, that he might *(q)* redeem it, the Right of Redemption belonging in the firſt Place to him; and therefore he deſired to know his Mind in this Matter.

The Kinſman readily conſented to redeem the Land. But when *Boaz*

And becauſe it is the Part of a Husband to protect and defend his Wife from Injuries; therefore to Spread the Wing or Skirt over one, is uſed for a Periphraſis of Marriage.

(*q*) Redeem. The Reaſon of this ſeems to be grounded upon the Law, by which the Firſt-born of ſuch a Marriage was to bear the Name of the Woman's former Husband that was dead, to keep up his Name in *Iſrael*; ſo that if that Kinſman had married *Ruth*, and ſhould have had but one Son by her, that Son being not to bear his Name, but the Name of her former Husband, he himſelf ſhould have had no Son to keep up his Name in *Iſrael*; and ſo his Inheritance might have been loſt from his Name, by paſſing into another Name and Family: which he was not willing to hazard.

told him, That at the ſame Time he muſt likewiſe take *Ruth* the *Moabiteſs* to Wife, to raiſe up the Name of her dead Husband upon his Inheritance, he declined the Buſineſs; giving this for a Reaſon, That he could not do it on thoſe Terms, without deſtroying his own Inheritance; and therefore he willingly reſigned his Right of Redemption to *Boaz*; who, without any Scruple, accepted it, and his Kinſman, according to the Cuſtom of thoſe Times, in token of relinquiſhing or transfering his Right, took off his *(r)* Shoe, and delivered it to *Boaz*.

Upon which *Boaz* made this Declaration to the Elders and all the People preſent, *Ye are my Witneſſes this Day, that I have bought all that was* Elimelech's, *and all that was his Son's, at the Hand of* Naomi.

Ye ſee likewiſe I have purchaſed Ruth *the* Moabiteſs *to be my Wife, to raiſe up the Name of the Dead upon their Inheritance, that their Name may not be loſt among their Relations. Of this I call you to witneſs this Day.*

To all which the Aſſembly gave their Acknowledgment; adding a hearty Prayer, that ſhe might be fruitful as *Rachael* and *Leah*, who were the original Raiſers of the Houſe of *Iſrael*.

Ruth conceived, and in due Time was delivered of a Son, whom they named *Obed*; which *Obed* was the Father of *Jeſſe*, and Grandfather of King *David*, of whom, according to the Fleſh, *(s)* came the Saviour of the World.

During the wiſe and virtuous Adminiſtration of *Deborah* and *Barak*, the *Iſraelites* enjoyed the Bleſſing of Peace; but when their Conductors died, they fell into their conſtitutional Sin of Idolatry, and provoked their God to deliver them into the Hands of their Enemies. He permitted the *Midianites* to over-run their Country, who for ſeven Years kept them in ſuch Subjection, that they were forced to betake themſelves to Dens in the Mountains and Caves in the Earth, and to fortified places; from whence, in Spring-time, they ſtole out to ſow their Land; but to-

(r) Shoe. This was the manner of confirming Bargins, Sales, Exchanges, and Alienations among the *Iſraelites*. There were two ſorts of it:

The firſt was penal; as when a Man refuſed to marry his Brother's Wife, to raiſe up Seed to the Deceaſed, who died childleſs; for then the Law commanded, that the Woman ſhould pluck off his Shoe, and ſpit in his Face, uſing theſe Words; *Thus ſhall it be done to the Man that refuſeth to raiſe up Iſſue to his Brother's Family.*

The ſecond was ceſſionary, or in token of Reſignation, and did not reach to compel the Kinſman in the ſecond, third and fourth Degree to marry the Widow: but he might tranſfer his Right to any other of the Kindred; and as a Sign of his Ceſſion or Tranſlation of his Right, he took off his Shoe and delivered it to his Kinſman, who would marry the Widow, in the Preſence of the Elders.

(s) Came. Herein is deſcribed, how Jeſus Chriſt, proceeded of *Ruth*, notwithſtanding ſhe was a *Moabite* of low Condition, and a Stranger from the People of God: which was a Type, that the Gentiles ſhould be ſanctified by him, and joined with his People.

Prophet

wards Harveſt the *Amalekites* and *Midianites* came and incamped in their Country, and tarried till they had devoured all the Proviſion and Forage they could find, and then they returned, leaving the *Iſraelites* nothing to ſupport Life.

The poor *Iſraelites* being ſerved thus Year after Year, at laſt grew greatly impoveriſhed, which put them in mind, that by their Sins they had drawn this Puniſhment upon themſelves; and that the only Remedy was, to have Recourſe to the Lord, who had permitted theſe Evils to befall them.

Whilſt they were ſupplicating God for Help, he ſent a (*t*) Prophet to expoſtulate with them for their Ingratitude, by which he brought them to a Senſe of their Folly, and his Juſtice in puniſhing them.

This Judgment brought them humble before the Lord, and prepared them for a due Reception of the Bleſſing he was about to confer, in ſending them a Deliverer, in the Perſon of *Gideon*, the Son of *Joaſh*.

At this Time *Gideon* was threſhing Wheat, that he might hide it from the *Midianites*. And whilſt he was thus employed in providing Suſtenance for his Family, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and ſaid, *The Lord be with thee, thou mighty Man of Valour.*

Gideon was ſoon apprized, by the Manner of this Salutation, that it was a Meſſage extraordinary; and as readily reply'd, *If the Lord be with us, Why then is all this befallen us? And where are all his Miracles, which our Fore-fathers have told us of, ſaying, Did not the Lord bring us up out of* Egypt? *But now the Lord hath forſaken us, and delivered us into the Hands of the* Midianites.

The Angel looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaid, *Be courageous, and thou ſhalt ſave* Iſrael *from the Hands of the* Midianites. *Is it not I that ſent thee?*

But *Gideon*, conſidering his own Weakneſs, and the low Condition of his own Family, more than the Preſence of him that ſpoke to him, anſwered, *In what Capacity am I to ſerve* Iſrael, *ſince my Family is but poor in the Tribe of* Manaſſeh, *and myſelf the leaſt among them.*

The Angel to encourage him ſaid, *Surely I will be with thee, and thou ſhalt ſmite the* Midianites *with as much Eaſe, as if they were but one Man.*

This Promiſe offered *Gideon* a Dawn of Hope; but deſirous of an Aſſurance of the Perſon who talked with him, he ſaid, *If now I have found Favour in thy Sight, be pleaſed to ſhew me ſome Token, whereby I may know that it is thou the Lord that talkeſt with me. Wherefore depart not hence I pray thee, till I return with my Offering, and ſet it before thee.*

(*t*) Prophet. St. *Auguſtine* ſuppoſes him to be that Angel which ſoon after appeared to *Gideon*; but others generally ſuppoſe him to be ſome Perſon endued with the Spirit of Propheſy by God, and ſent to the *Iſraelites*, as other Prophets were.

The Angel promiſed to tarry; and *Gideon* having prepared a Kid, and ſome unleavened Cakes, he came and preſented them before the Angel; by whoſe Direction, having laid them upon the Rock, the Angel, with the End of his Staff, touched the Cakes and the Fleſh, upon which Fire came out of the Rock and conſumed them; and the Angel inſtantly diſappeared.

Gideon upon this was ſenſible that it was an Angel that had appeared to him, and crying out in Deſpair, ſaid, *Alas, my Lord God! becauſe I have ſeen an Angel Face to Face, I ſhall die.*

But the Angel, tho' *Gideon* could not ſee him, to confirm and comfort him, bid him not fear, for he ſhould not die. *Gideon*, in thankful Remembrance of this gracious Interview, and God's Goodneſs to him, built an Altar there, and called it *Jehovah-Shalom*, that is, the Lord of Peace.

The ſame Night the Lord commanded *Gideon* to demoliſh the Altar of *Baal*, which in thoſe corrupt Times had been erected, and to cut down the Groves there; and build an Altar to the Lord his God upon the Top of the Rock; after which, to ſacrifice his Father's (*u*) ſecond Bullock upon it, which was ſeven Years old, and offer it for a Burnt-Sacrifice, with the Wood of the Grove, which he was to cut down.

Gideon readily obeyed God; but conſidering it would be difficult to do this in the Day-time, he reſolved to do it by Night; and taking ten of his Servants to aſſiſt him, he did as God had commanded.

The Inhabitants of the Place being informed what *Gideon* had done, demanded him of his Father, that they might put him to death: But *Joaſh* would not deliver his Son, reſolutely ſaying, *If Baal is God, let him avenge himſelf on him that deſtroyed his Altar.* From which Occaſion *Joaſh* called his Son *Gidion Jerub-Baal*, which ſignifies, Let *Baal* avenge. Thus this Tumult ended.

CHAP. VIII.

Gideon *muſters the Tribes. Receives an Omen of Succeſs. Is appointed a ſelect Number of Men. Encouraged by a Dream. Obtains a ſignal Victory over the Enemies of* Iſrael, *and dies in Peace. The* Iſraelites *fall into Idolatry and Ingratitude.* Abimelech *is made King, after the bloody Maſſacre of his Brethren.* Abimelech *and the* Shechemites *are puniſhed for their Cruelty and Wickedneſs.*

(*u*) Second. This Bullock is thought by the Rabbins and others to be called the ſecond from the Stall in which it ſtood and was fed, which was the ſecond in Order of Place; and being as many Years old, as their Subjection to *Midian* was, the deſtroying this Bullock might in ſome Meaſure, prefigure the breaking off the *Midianiſh* Yoke from the Neck of *Gideon*; whoſe Name ſignifies a *Breaker* or *Deſtroyer*.

IT was now about the Time when the *Midianites* and *Amalekites*, with other Eaſtern People, uſed to come, and plunder the Country, who appearing in a vaſt Body, incamped in the Valley of *Jezreel*.

Then was *Gideon* inſpired with a more than ordinary Courage, and by Sound of Trumpet ſummoned all thoſe of his own Family to come in quickly to him. He alſo ſent Meſſengers through the Tribes of *Manaſſeh*, *Aſher*, *Zabulun* and *Naphtali*, they came in ſuch Numbers, that in a ſhort Time he could muſter up an Army of two and thirty thouſand Men, which were but few in Compariſon of the Enemy's Army, which conſiſted of an hundred and thirty five thouſand men.

Gideon, conſidering the vaſt Odds the Enemy had, begged of God to give him ſome Omen for an Aſſurance of Succeſs to him and his Men. The Sign he propoſed was, That he laying a Fleece of Wool on the Floor the Dew ſhould be upon the Fleece only, and the Earth round it ſhould be dry. Which the next Morning was done; for the Ground about it was dry, but the Fleece was ſo full of Dew, that he wrung a Bowl-full of Water out of it. Then (*w*) inverting the former Manner, he deſired that the Fleece might be dry, and the Ground dewy; which was likewiſe done.

Gideon being fully convinced by this double Miracle, reſolved forthwith to attack the Enemy. But God knowing the Folly and Ingratitude of the *Iſraelites*, and rightly forſeeing, that if with this Army they ſhould conquer the *Midianites*, they would vainly impute it to their own Courage and Numbers, and not to his Aſſiſtance; therefore ordered *Gideon* to make Proclamation in the Camp, That whoſoever was afraid, ſhould have Liberty to return Home.

Upon this, two and twenty thouſand quitted this Expedition, only ten thouſand remaining with *Gideon*. This was a very inconſiderable Number, in compariſon of the numerous Hoſt of the *Midianites*.

But yet, few as the *Iſraelites* were, it came within the Verge of Poſſibility, that they might defeat their Foes with this Handful of Men: and therefore God reſolving that the whole Action and Victory ſhould appear to be his Doing, ordered *Gideon* to bring his Soldiers down to the Water, where he would give him a Sign to direct him what Men to ſelect for this Buſineſs, which was this. They that took up Water in their Hands and lapped it, ſhould go with him; but they who lay down to drink, ſhould not go. Only three hundred of them drank out of their Hands, whom God commanded him to keep with him, and diſmiſs the reſt.

But leſt *Gideon*, upon God's reducing his Army to ſo ſmall a Number

(*w*) Inverting. It may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that *Gideon*, for his own Satisfaction, would not have been thus impertinent to require a Repetition of the Sign, but that he rather did it to encourage his Men, and to take off all Suſpicion of Art or Contrivance.

as three hundred Men, ſhould grow diffident of the promiſed Succeſs, he was commanded to take his Servant *Phura*, and late at Night go to the Enemy's Camp and liſten, where he ſhould hear that which would encourage him. Which he accordingly did; and there he heard a Soldier expounding a Dream to another, which was ſo in Favour of the *Iſraelites*, that he heard his own Name mentioned, with this Advantage, that God would deliver the *Midianitiſh* Army into the Hands of *Gideon*.

Thus encouraged, *Gideon*, in humble Adoration, worſhipped the God of his Mercies; and getting back undiſcovered, put his Men in order, dividing them into three Companies, an hundred in each. He gave to every Man a Trumpet, and a Pitcher, with a burning Lamp in it, charging them to obſerve his Motions, and do juſt as they ſhould ſee him do.

Gideon having thus diſpoſed this little Body of Men, put himſelf at the Head of one of them; and giving the Signal, by breaking the Pitchers, and ſounding their Trumpets, the reſt did the like, and with a terrible Shout, they cried out, *The Sword of the Lord, and of* Gideon! This Alarm affected their Eyes and their Ears with unuſual Objects, and encreaſed by the Horror of the (*x*) Night, ſo added to their Confuſion, that, miſtaking their own Party, they fell on each other's Swords. God having before diſpoſed the *Midianites* for Deſtruction; ſo that *Gideon* and his Army gained an eaſy Victory, having nothing to do, but to purſue a flying and timorous Enemy.

In this they were aſſiſted by thoſe, that on Proclamation had deſerted the common Cauſe, who, though they were afraid to fight, yet had Courage to purſue.

Gideon, to make ſure Work, and to prevent the *Midianites*, for ſome Time, to give *Iſrael* any Diſturbance, ſent to the *Ephraimites* to poſſeſs themſelves of the Paſſes on the *Jordan*, that ſo, few or none of them might eſcape.

This they according perform'd, taking *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, two *Midianitiſh* Princes, whom they ſlew, and then followed the Purſuit; which *Gideon* and his Party continued very cloſely till they came to *Succoth*, where being faint and weary they halted, and *Gideon* deſired of the Inhabitants ſome Refreſhment for his Men. The Princes of *Succoth*, knowing that *Gideon* with his ſmall Party was in chaſe of *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, two of the Kings of *Midian*, who with fifteen thouſand Men were fled to *Karcor*, inſtead of giving *Gideon* and his Soldiers any Refreſhment, ridicul'd him on the Account of his little Army, and in Deriſion ask'd him whether he was ſo ſecure of Victory over the Princes he purſu'd, as to demand Relief of them? This unman-

(*x*) Night. It is ſaid, That this Action began at the beginning of the middle Watch; which dividing the Night from Six to Six into four Watches, as moſt do, ſhould anſwer to Ten at Night with us.

nerly and inhoſpitable Treatment ſo incens'd *Gideon*, that he told them, If the Lord gave him Succeſs againſt *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, he would make them repent their Incivility. The ſame he threatned to the Inhabitants of *Penuel*, for the like Rudeneſs; and with his fatigued Party continued the Purſuit till he came to *Karcor*, where the two *Midianitiſh* Princes with their rallied Forces lay thoughtleſs of Danger. But *Gideon* taking the Advantage of this Security, ſurpriz'd and defeated them, taking the two Kings Priſoners, whom he brought in Triumph with him to *Succoth*: And called the Chiefs of the Place, Seventy-ſeven in Number, who had before upbraided him, to a ſevere Account, chaſtiſing them with Thorns and Briars, as he had before threatned them. Nor was he leſs ſparing to *Penuel*, whoſe Fortifications he demoliſhed, and ſlew the Governors.

The captive Princes had mercyleſsly deſtroyed all before them in their March, nor did *Gideon*'s Family eſcape the general Maſſacre at *Tabor*. *Gideon*, intending to ſhew Mercy to the two Kings, if they had ſhewed any to his Houſe, demanded, what Manner of Men they where whom they had ſlain at *Tabor*; who anſwered ſomewhat flatteringly, that they were like him, having the majeſtick Appearance of Royal Children. *Gideon*, from their deſcription concluding they were his Brethren, whom they had ſlain, declared, if they had ſpared them, he would have ſaved their Lives; but ſince they had killed his Brethren, they muſt expect no Mercy. Then commanding his Son *Jether* to fall upon them, but he being a Youth, and ſomewhat timorous, *Gideon* diſpatched them with his own Hand; ordering them to be ſtripped of their Royal Ornaments, and their Camels of their rich Trappings and Furniture.

The *Ephraimites*, who had behaved moſt valiantly, brought the Heads of *Orb* and *Zeeb*, whom they had ſlain to *Gideon*, as Tokens of their ſingular Service; and beginning to Quarrel with *Gideon* for not calling upon them at the firſt, he wiſely pacify'd them, by magnifying their Service and Succeſs in the Purſuit. And now the Strength of *Midian* being thus broke by the Slaughter of their whole Army, *Iſrael* enjoyed a Peace of forty Years.

The *Iſraelites*, fond of *Gideon*'s Courage and Conduct, in this great Deliverance, reſolved to crown his Merit with the Settlement of the Government on him and his Family. But *Gideon*, well knowing the Honour of this Victory was not due to him, but God alone, modeſtly and generouſly declined their Offer, ſaying, *I will not rule over you, neither ſhall my Son, but the Lord ſhall rule over you. Yet to let you ſee I do not ſlight your Kindneſs, I will requeſt one Thing of you; and that is, That you will give me the Ear-rings of your Plunder.*

To this they all readily conſented; and ſpreading a Garment on the Ground, they threw in the Ear-rings, which

which by Weight amounted to one thouſand ſeven hundred Shekles of Gold; beſides the rich Ornaments and Robes of the Kings, with the Chains that were upon the Camels Necks.

Of this Gold *Gideon* made an *(z)* Ephod, and placed it in his own City *Ophrah*, where he dwelt, as a Monument of this Victory. Which in Time, by a wrong Uſe, and contrary to the Will of *Gideon*, proved a Snare to his Family, and indeed to the whole Houſe of *Iſrael*.

Gideon ſurvived this ſignal Victory forty Years, during which, *Iſrael* enjoyed a profound Peace; but at his Death, they fell, as uſual into Idolatry and Ingratitude, not only to God, but to the Memory of *Gideon* their Deliverer.

Gideon, by ſeveral Wives, had ſeventy Sons; and by a Concubine, he had one Son, whom he named *Abimelech*. And though *Gideon* had refuſed the Government of *Iſrael*, both for himſelf and his Sons, yet as ſoon as he was dead, his Son *Abimelech*, an aſpiring Youth, ſuggeſting to his Mother's Family at *Shechim*, that his ſeventy Brethren would uſurp the Government over them, adviſed them to conſider, whether it would not be better for them to be governed by one, than by ſeventy Perſons; at the ſame Time, putting them in Mind, that he was of their Family and Kindred.

His Relations upon this Suggeſtion propoſed Advancement to themſelves, which they inſinuated to the *Shechemites*, who cloſing with the Project, contrived how to advance *Abimelech* to the Government; and that Money might not be wanting to forward the Deſign, they took ſome out of the Treaſury of their God *Baal-berith*, and gave it to *Abimelech*, who with it hired a Company of diſſolute Fellows to attend him.

With theſe Ruffians, he repaired to his deceaſed Father's Houſe at *Ophrah*, where he ſeized ſixty-nine of his Brethren, and ſlew them upon one *(a)* Stone; the youngeſt, named *Jotham*, having timely Notice, eſcaped. Soon after this bloody and unnatural Execution, the *Shechemites*, having nothing to fear from *Gideon*'s Houſe, aſſembled together at *Millo*, and choſe *Abimelech (b)* King.

When this inhuman Proceedure, reached the Ears of *Jotham*, he went to the Top of Mount *Gerizim*, where in a parabolical Oration he repreſented to the *Shechemites*, how his

(z) *Ephod.* The Ephod was the upper Garment which the Prieſt wore upon his Shoulders.

(a) Stone. Some will have this Stone to be an Altar, dedicated by *Abimelech* to the Idol *Baal*, and erected in the ſame Place, where his Father *Gideon* had before deſtroyed the Altar of *Baal*, to recompenſe the Diſgrace done by him to the Idol.

(b) King. In this Choice there were neither the Call of God, nor the Conſent of the People; for *Abimelech* was not appointed King by the body of the *Iſraelites*, but by a few diſorderly ſeditious *Shechemites*, without the knowledge of *Judah* or the other Tribes; and reigned only in *Shechem*.

Father *Jerub-baal*, had refuſed to have the Government of *Iſrael* ſettled upon him and his Family; and that they had now diſpoſed of it to one, as much inferior in Virtue and Honour to *Gideon*, and his lawful Sons, as the Bramble is to the Olive, Fig-tree or Vine: he expoſtulated the Injury done to his Family, and reproached them with their Ingratitude, *If ye have done truly and ſincerely in making* Abimelech *King; and if you have dealt well with* Jerub-baal, *and his Houſe, who merited ſo well of you; (for my Father fought for you, and delivered you from the Oppreſſion of* Midian, *and yet you have riſen up againſt my Father's Houſe this Day, and have ſlain his Sons, and made* Abimelech, *the Son of his Concubine, King, becauſe he is your Brother.) If you have done well in this, then rejoice in* Abimelech, *and let him rejoice in you.*

But if not, let (d) *Fire come out from* Abimelech, *and devour the Men of* Shechem, *and the Houſe of* Millo, *and let them devour him.*

Jotham having thus delivered himſelf to the *Shechemites*, made his Eſcape to *Beer*, where he lived ſecure from *Abimelech*'s Rage.

Within three Years afterwards, his Curſe was verified, both upon *Abimelech* and the *Shechemites*; for they conſpired againſt *Abimelech*, attempting to ſeize or kill him. But being diſappointed of their Purpoſe, they joined another profligate Wretch, and his Company, one that lived by the Spoil of others, as the *Shechemites* did. His Name was *Gaal*, the Son of *Ebed*, and an impudent Boaſter, but a very great Coward.

Gaal being ſet at the Head of this diſſolute Gang, ravaged the Country uncontrouled for ſome Time, ſpoiling the Vineyards of the *Shechemites* who made *Abimelech* King; and in their Mirth and Jollity they deſpiſed *Abimelech*; but none ſpoke with more Contempt of him than *Gaal*.

The wild Carriage of the abandoned *Gaal*, ſoon reached the Ear of *Zebul*, who was *Abimelech*'s Vice-roy in *Shechem*; but he not being ſtrong enough to chaſtiſe him for his Inſolence, ſent privately to *Abimelech*, to acquaint him, that *Gaal* and his mad Crew were come to *Shechem*, and had fortified the City againſt him, adviſeing him to come by Night, and lie in Ambuſcade till the next Morning, that ſo he might ſurprize them.

Abimelech approved of the Stratagem, and forthwith put it in Execution; which ſucceeded ſo well, that *Gaal*, and thoſe that followed him were defeated and ſlain; and the next Day he ſtormed the Place and took it; and to expreſs his Reſentment more furiouſly, after he had demoliſhed the City, he ſowed it with (e) Salt. But during theſe Tranſactions, ſome that eſcaped the Fury

(d) Fire. That is, let *Abimelech* be a Scourge to the *Shechemites*, and they to him, in Expiation of their Injuſtice and Ingratitude to the Houſe of *Gideon*.

(e) Salt. This was an old Cuſtom of puniſhing Cities for Treachery. Not that the Strowing of Salt ſignified drying up, or rendering of the Soil barren: (for there was no Occaſion

of the Conqueror's Sword, and had fled to the Tower, ſeeing the Houſes of the City thrown down, not ſuppoſing themſelves ſafe in the Tower, took ſanctuary in a Fort belonging to the Temple of their God *Berith*: Which *Abimelech* hearing, he took an Ax in his Hand, and commanding his Army to do the ſame, he marched up to the Mount *Malmon*, where grew a Grove of Trees, and cutting down a Bough, he laid it on his Shoulder, and brought it to the Fort. The reſt did the ſame: and when they had laid the Boughs together, *Abimelech* ſet them on Fire; by which about a thouſand Men and Women were deſtroyed.

This Succeſs encouraged *Abimelech* to attack the City of *Thebez*, which he took by Storm. But there being a ſtrong Tower in the City, the Inhabitants fled thither, and maintained it for ſome Time againſt all the Force of *Abimelech*, which ſo irritated the impatient Conqueror, that purſuing his Fate, he came near the Tower to encourage his Men, and facilitate the taking of it by his Preſence; but preſſing too near the Door, with a Deſign to have ſet it on Fire, a Woman from above caſt down a Piece of Milſtone upon his Head, which broke his Skull.

Abimelech, finding himſelf mortally wounded, called haſtily to his Armour-bearer, and commanded him to diſpatch him, that it might not be ſaid He died by the Hand of a Woman. His Servants obeyed him, and the Report of his Death was no ſooner rumoured among the Troops, but they diſperſed.

Thus were *Abimelech* and the *Shechemites* Scourges to each other, and *Jotham*'s Curſe compleated in the Fate of both.

CHAP IX.

Tola *ſucceeds* Abimelech *in the Conduct of the* Iſraelites. *They are again puniſhed for their Tranſgreſſions; and on their Submiſſion, favoured with Tokens of the divine Regard.* Jephthah *firſt deſpiſed is afterwards veſted with the Command of the* Iſraelitiſh *Army againſt their Enemies. He behaves bravely; makes an extraordinary Vow, which he executes with a moſt rigid Punctuality.* Jephthah *dies.* Iſrael *enjoys a Peace during the Reigns of three Leaders. Particular Circumſtances which attend the Birth of* Samſon.

TOLA, the Son of *Phua*, Uncle by the Father's Side to *Abimelech*, of the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, was appointed Ruler or Judge of *Iſrael* in

Occaſion for that in an inhabited Town) but to ſhew the Deteſtation of their Rebellion, and that hereafter none ſhould rebuild or re-people it.

In this Action Part of *Jotham's* Curſe was accompliſhed; for *Abimelech*, tho' not a lawful King, yet ſerved the *Shechemites* juſtly, who after they had made him their King, revolted from him.

his Stead; of which nothing is recorded, but that he governed *Iſrael* three and twenty Years.

To him ſucceeded *Jair* of *Gilead* who reigned two and twenty Years.

After this, God being provoked by the Idolatry of the *Iſraelites*, he permitted the *Philiſtines*, *Amorites* and *Ammonites* to over-run their Country as they pleaſed for eighteen Years; and in the laſt Year, the *Ammonites* bent their whole Force againſt the Tribes of *Judah*, *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*.

The *Iſraelites*, finding themſelves not able to deal with the vaſt Numbers of their Enemies, becauſe ſenſible of their Follies, by which they had provoked God to puniſh them thus; and therefore acknowledging their Sin of Idolatry, they begged of God to aſſiſt them once more.

But God upbraided them with Ingratitude, and to increaſe the Pungency of their Sorrow, bid them cry to the Gods which they had choſen, and try if they would deliver them in the Time of their Diſtreſs. This was a cutting Reproof to the *Iſraelites*.

However, to recover God's Favour and Protection, they reformed; for they put away their Idols, and ſerved the Lord.

The God of *Iſrael* after his wonted Goodneſs to that ungrateful People, having brought them to a Senſe of their Crimes by the Rigour of his Puniſhment, again returned to them in much Mercy, and pointed out to them the certain Means of Deliverance.

There was at that Time in the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, which ſettled on the other ſide of *Jordan*, a Man of Note among his People, whoſe Name was *Gilead*, of the Family of that *Gilead* the Son of *Machir*, to whom *Moſes* gave the City of *Gilead*, from whence the Family was called *Gileadites*.

This *Gilead* had ſeveral Sons by his Wife; and he had one Son by a (*g*) Harlot, whom he named *Jephthah*.

When *Gilead*'s lawful Sons were grown up, they thruſt out *Jephthah*, telling him, That being not born in lawful Matrimony, he ſhould have no Inheritance among them.

Jephthah upon this, expecting worſe Uſage, haſtened from them, and took up his Station in the Land of *Tob*, which Place being very ſubject to the Depredations and military Expeditions of the Enemy, *Jephthah* the rather choſe for his Reſidence, being himſelf naturally brave and daring. In their Excurſions againſt the Enemy, he always diſtinguiſhed himſelf; ſo at laſt he was courted to accept a Command of a Number of young fellows, with whom he went a foraging.

In this Time of general Proweſs, the *Gileadites* thinking themſelves aggrieved by the *Ammonites*, reſolved upon War, but wanted a General.

(*g*) Harlot. *Joſephus* underſtands by the Word Zonah, which we render an Harlot, a Stranger, or one who was not of the Seed of *Iſrael*.

Where

Whereupon at a grand Meeting of their Chiefs, it was agreed, That he who ſhould firſt attack the *Ammonites*, ſhould be their General.

Then bethinking themſelves of *Jephthah*, whom they knew to be a Man of Courage and Conduct, they addreſſed themſelves to him, and offered him the Command of their Army.

Jephthah ſurpriſed at this ſudden Change, aſked them, How they who had expelled him his Father's Houſe, could expect any Succour from him in their Diſtreſs?

They acknowledged their preſent Diſtreſs was the only Motive of their coming, and repeated their Importunities to him to go with them.

Jephthah mindful of the ill Treatment he had received from the People, who now offered him a Poſt of Honour, determined not to engage with them, but upon ſure Terms. For, ſays he, *If I go along with you, and ſucceed againſt the* Ammonites, *ſhall I be your Ruler afterwards?*

Their Neceſſity was ſo preſſing at this Time, that they readily conſented, ſolemnly engaging that it ſhould be ſo. Upon this, *Jephthah* went with them, and the People made him Captain over them; and *Jephthah* repeated the Covenant, or Agreement, between them and him before the Lord in *Mizpeh*.

Jephthah, having thus ſecured to himſelf the Conduct of the *Iſraelites*, in Caſe of Succeſs, was greatly animated, and ſent Ambaſſadors to the King of *Ammon*, to demand the Reaſon of his invading the *Iſraelites?*

The *Ammonitiſh* King replyed, That the Land was his, and that the *Iſraelites*, upon their coming out of *Egypt*, took it from the *Ammonites*, which now he demanded, or would make them reſtore it.

Jephthah, by other Ambaſſadors, told him the Caſe from the Beginning; That the *Iſraelites*, in their Paſſage from *Egypt*, being denied to paſs thro' the Countries of *Edom* and *Moab*, were forced to fetch a great Compaſs untill they came unto the Land of the *Amorites*, where they were not only refuſed a Paſſage, but attacked in a hoſtile Manner, by the *Amoritiſh* King, whom the *Iſraelites* defeated in a pitched Battle, fairly conquering, not only the Kingdom of the *Amorites*, but whatſoever elſe belonged to *Sihon* the *Amoritiſh* King; who having before taken from the King of *Moab*, the Land now in diſpute, it fell with the reſt by Conqueſt from the *Amorite* to *Iſrael*. Beſides, he confirmed *Iſrael*'s Title by a long Preſcription of many Years peaceable Enjoyment.

But theſe Reaſons would not do with the King of *Ammon*, who marched directly againſt the *Iſraelites*, and was by them as warmly received.

But before the Action, *Jephthah*, the more readily to ſecure himſelf of Victory, made this Vow to the Lord; *If*, ſaid he, *thou wilt give me Succeſs againſt the* Ammonites *this Day, whatſoever cometh forth of mine Houſe to meet me, when I return, I will ſurely conſecrate*

conſecrate to the Lord, or I will offer it up for a Burnt-offering. *

To this Victory of *Jephthah*'s, a Civil War ſucceeded, between the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and the Tribe of *Gilead*.

The *Ephraimites* were an ambitious quarrelſome People, and this was not the firſt Inſtance of their Temper, which formerly went no further than Words: But now the mutinous *Ephraimites* carried it further, and with as little Reaſon; for aſſembling their Forces together, they came upon *Jephthah*, and demanded why he fought the *Ammonites* without them? *Jephthah* very juſtly remonſtrated with them on the impropriety of their Demand, and ſhewed that the Cauſe of their Diſſatisfaction was owing to themſelves, who refuſed to come to his Aſſiſtance when the *Ammonites* attack'd him. The unreaſonable *Ephraimites* were ſo enraged at this juſt Reproach, that, having nothing to urge in Vindication of themſelves, and depending on their Numbers, threatened to burn his Houſe over his Head.

Jephthah finding it to no Purpoſe to reaſon longer with them, muſtered what Force he could in ſo ſhort Time, and being fluſhed with the late Succeſs, reſolved to fight the *Ephraimites* who had no Reaſon to deſpiſe him and his, or call them Fugitives of *Ephraim*; for the *Gileadites* needed no Reproach to rouze or whet their Courage, eſpecially under the Conduct of their valient General *Jephthah*. The Ar-

* This Paſſage has occaſioned no ſmall Controverſy among Commentators.—The Doubt is, whether *Jephthah* offered up his Daughter for a Burnt-offering, or conſecrated her to the Public Service of God. It appears, that *Jephthah*'s Daughter was not ſacrified, but devoted to the Lord. It is plain that in many Caſes, his Vow could not have been executed: for ſuppoſe on his Return, that a Dog, or any other unclean Animal, had firſt met him, he muſt not have offered it for a Burnt-offering, the Law of *Moſes* having ſtrickly forbidden ſuch Sacrifices; beſides, If *Jephthah* was under a Neceſſity of offering his Daughter, who was to be employed in that diſagreeable Taſk? The Prieſts were commanded to do all in their Power to deter the People from the Commiſſion of ſo abominable a Practice; the Magiſtrates well knew, that ſuch Sacrifices were ſtrictly forbidden by God himſelf, and, certainly no Perſon can conceive *Jephthah* capable of committing ſuch an inhuman Office. Upon the whole, therefore, I think it appears, that ſhe was not ſacrificed, but devoted to the Service of God.

And ſhe knew no Man, Judges, xi. 39. This it is thought, is a ſufficient Proof that ſhe was not ſacrifed; for otherwiſe, it would have been ſuperfluous to ſay, that after the Vow was performed, ſhe knew no Man.

The Daughters of Iſrael *went Yearly*, Judges xi. 40. The Original Word, which we render, Lament, is capable of different Significations; by ſome it is tranſlated, to talk with; by others, to praiſe; If we adopt the firſt, it is a demonſtrative Proof that ſhe was alive, and therefore they went at certain Seaſons, to comfort and conſole her. If the latter, the Senſe will be, that they went to praiſe her Virtue; who, in the midſt of her Father's Afflictions for the miſerable Condition to which his raſh Vow had ſubjected her, did all in her Power to aſſwage his Grief, by aſſuring him, that ſhe ſubmitted to the Will of God with the utmoſt Reſignation, and that though a State of perpetual Virginity was the greateſt Puniſhment which cou'd befal an *Iſraeliſh* Woman, who generally placed her greateſt Happineſs in the Expectation of the Meſſiah's ſpringing from her Seed, yet even this ſhe would chearfully undergo, rather than he ſhould falſify the Oath he had made.

Shib-

mies joined, and after a ſhort but ſharp Diſpute, the Fortune of the Battle declared for *Gilead*, *Ephraim* being forc'd to fly. *Jephthah* reſolving to make ſure Work, and prevent the *Ephraimites* from diſturbing him quickly, ſecured all the Paſſes on the *Jordan*, which thoſe *Ephraimites* that eſcaped in the Fight, muſt of Neceſſity paſs, to get home; So that as faſt as any of them came thither, if upon Examinion they owned themſelves *Ephraimites*, they were put to the Sword: If any denied, they gave them the Teſt, which was to pronounce the Word (*k*) SHIBBOLETH, which they could not do, either thro' Fear or Infatuation, calling it SIBBOLETH; which ſmall Variation coſt them their Lives. In this Action and Purſuit there were ſlain two and forty thouſand of the *Ephraimites*.

Jephthah, having thus thro' the divine Aſſiſtance ſignalized his Valour in a Series of Succeſs, both againſt foreign and domeſtick Enemies, ſpent the reſt of his Life in Peace, which laſted not long, for the whole Time of his Adminiſtration was but of ſix Years Continuance.

Jephthah was ſucceeded by *Ibzan* of *Bethlehem*, of whom there is nothing more recorded, than that he had thirty Sons and thirty Daughters, and that he reigned ſeven Years.

Elon a *Zebulonite* ſucceeded *Ibzan*, who governed *Iſrael* ten Years; and after him *Abdon* ruled eight: all that was ſaid of this laſt is, that he had forty Sons, and thirty Grandſons.

In theſe three Reigns, *Iſrael* enjoyed a Peace of three and twenty Years; in which Time, growing wanton they lapſed into their former Sins; by which they provoked God to puniſh them, which he did, in delivering them into the Hands of the *Philiſtines*.

Samſon of whoſe Exploits much is recorded in ſacred Writ, is ſuppoſed to have been born about the Time of (*m*) *Jephthah*'s Victory. His Birth being attended with unuſual Events and Circumſtances, we ſhall relate the Particulars.

Samſon was the Son of *Manoah* a (*n*) *Danite*, whoſe Wife having been long barren, the Angel of the Lord appeared to her, when alone, and told her, She ſhould conceive, and bear a Son, directing her how to manage and order herſelf whilſt ſhe was with Child, by forbearing Wine or Strong Drink, and all unclean

(*k*) *Shibboleth.* Which ſignifies a Stream, Water-Courſe, or Falling of Waters.

(*m*) *Jephthah*'s. Allowing *Samſon* to have been born at this Time, he muſt be at leaſt thirty Years old at the Death of *Abdon*, his immediate Predeceſſor: And when he took upon him the Adminſtration.

(*n*) *Danite.* The Tribe of *Dan* bordering upon the *Philiſtines* was moſt expoſed to their Incurſions and Invaſions, and therefore God out of that Tribe choſe *Samſon* for a Judge and Revenger. Which is very agreeable to the Prophecy of *Jacob* when he bleſſed his Sons a little before his Death. Dan *ſhall be a Serpent by the Way, an Adder by the Path, biting the Heels of the Horſe, ſo that his Rider ſhall fall backwards.*

Shave

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2 AUG 32
MUSEUM

SAMSON'S BIRTH FORETOLD, Jud. 13.

Meats. And that after ſhe was delivered of him, ſhe ſhould not * ſhave his Head; for he ſhould be a *Nazarite* unto God from his Birth, and ſhould begin to deliver *Iſrael* from the Oppreſſions of the *Philiſtines*.

The Woman informed her Huſband of this extraordinary Interview with the Angel, and the Injunctions ſhe had received from him; *Manoah* was not ſo much ſurprized as overjoyed at the Hopes of having a Son, but had an earneſt Deſire to ſee this divine Meſſenger himſelf, his Pretence for it, being to be further inſtructed in the Management of the Child, when he ſhould be born.

God graciouſly anſwered his Requeſt; and the Angel again appeared, repeating to the expecting Couple the former Inſtructions. The Angel appearing in human Shape, *Manoah* took him to be a Man of God, and preſſed him to accept of an Entertainment.

The Angel told him, He would not; but adviſed him to expreſs his Gratitude in a Burnt-Offering to the Lord.

Manoah accordingly prepared a Kid and a Meat-Offering, and offered as a Sacrifice unto God; and then the Angel in a Wonderful Manner diſcovered himſelf, which before he refuſed to do at *Manoah*'s Importunity; for when the Flame aſcended from the Altar, the Angel aſcended in it and diſappeared.

Now poor *Manoah* began too late, he feared, to repent his Curioſity, and both he and his Wife proſtrated themſelves on the Ground. But he looking upon himſelf and Wife as loſt, cried out, *We ſhall ſurely die, becauſe we have dared to ſee God.*

But the Woman, armed with more Reaſon and Courage, argued with her timorous and deſponding Huſband, and told him, That if the Lord had intended to deſtroy them, he would not have accepted an Offering from them, nor condeſcended to communicate ſuch a Bleſſing to them as he had promiſed.

According to the appointed Time the Woman was delivered of a Son, whom, from the Angel's appearing a ſecond Time to her, ſhe called *Samſon*.

By the Conſequence, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that *Samſon*'s Parents obſerved the Directions given by the Angel for his Nurſing and Erudition; for whilſt a Child, the Lord bleſſed him, ſo that he grew to a wonderful Strength. And while he was but a Youth, the Spirit of the Lord began to (*p*) move him at certain Times

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* Shave. Long Hair was much eſteemed among the *Jews*, and here *Samſon*'s Mother was forbid to cut his Hair, becauſe he was to be a *Nazarite* unto the Lord, that is, dedicated to him.

As to the cutting off his Hair after by *Delilah*, it was done in a fradulent Manner, not only to deprive him of his Hair, but of his Strength, that ſo they might deſtroy him.

(*p*) Move him. This is an *Hebrew* Phraiſe and it is often uſed upon particular Occaſions. Hence St. *Ambroſe* obſerves on *Luke* i. 17. *He ſhall go before him in the Spirit and Power of* Elias; theſe two, the Spirit and Power (which is Fortitude) are always joined together: For all Fortitude, whether in attempting or ſuffering, is from the Holy Ghoſt, that inſpires us.

Old

to exert himſelf in Actions of Strength and Activity, in the (*q*) old Camp of *Dan*, between *Zorah* and *Eſhtaol*.

CHAP. X.

Samſon's *extraordinary Exploits from various intereſting Cauſes. Extraordinary Conqueſt over the* Philiſtines. *His remarkable Strength. He is overcome by* Delilah. *Birth of* Samuel. *God's extraordinary Revelation to him.*

SAMSON, being grown to Man's Eſtate, had a Mind to travel, and ſee the Country; and coming to *Timnath*, a City belonging to the *Philiſtines*; he happened to caſt his Eyes on a beautiful *Philiſtine*, who ſo captivated the young Hero, that he could not live without her. But in Duty to his Father and Mother, he would not Marry without their Conſent.

The fond Parents expoſtulated with their Son, the Unreaſonableneſs of the Match, in offering to marry into an uncircumciſed Family. But the amorous Youth conſulting his Paſſion more than Religion, was ſo preſſing in his Requeſt to his Parents, that their Indulgence was not Proof againſt it. But to gratify him, they went with him to *Timnath*, to ſee this Beauty, and treat with her Parents about the Marriage.

During the Courſe of their Journey, it happened that *Samſon* was at ſome Diſtance from the Company, when a young Lion came in a mighty Rage out of the Vineyard of *Timnath* and attacked him.

Upon which the Spirit of the Lord came mighty upon him, ſo that he ſlew the Lion with as much Eaſe, as if it had been a Kid.

After this action he went on and overtook his Parents, but acquainted them not with this Adventure of the Lion.

Being arrived at *Timnath*, the Match was ſoon concluded. And not long after, *Samſon* and his Parents, taking another Journey to ſolemnize their Nuptials; and in their Way to *Timnath*, *Samſon* remembering this Place where he had encountered with the Lion, his Curioſity led him to ſee what was become of the Carcaſe; when, to his great Surprize, he found a Swarm of Bees, with ſome Honey, of which, taking ſome in his Hands, he went on eating; and when he overtook his Parents, he gave them ſome of it, but did not inform them from whence he had it.

Being arrived at *Timnath*, *Samſon* entertained the Relations, on both

(*q*) Old Camp. This Camp of *Dan* was probably that Place, where the *Danites* pitched their Camp in their Expedition and Enterprize againſt *Laiſh*, for it is not likely, that the *Philiſtines*, who had the *Iſraelites* at that Time under entire Subjection, ſhould ſuffer them to have any ſtanding Camp. And, if the Reader looks back a little, this is another Argument, that the Story of *Micah*, and of the *Danites* Expedition, was tranſacted before *Samſon*'s Time, though by the Compilers of the Bible they are related after.

Com-

Sides, for ſeven Days; and to grace the Nuptials the more, his Wife's Kindred brought thirty of their prime Youth to bear him Company. To theſe young Men, *Samſon*, during the Wedding-Feaſt, propoſed a Riddle, which was this, *Out of the Eater came forth Meat, and out of the Strong came forth Sweetneſs.*

He gave them ſeven Days to expound the Riddle in, upon Condition that if they expounded it, he would give them thirty Garments, and as many Shirts; but if they did not, they ſhould give him the ſame Number.

The young Men not knowing how to expound the Riddle, applied themſelves to his Wife, and perſuaded her to diſcover the Meaning of it. After much Importunity ſhe prevailed upon her Husband, who was ſo weak as to truſt her with it, and ſhe immediately told it to thoſe young Men, who came to *Samſon*, at the End of the ſeven Days, and ſaid, *What is ſweeter than Honey, and what is ſtronger than a Lion?*

Samſon was ſatisfied his Wife had diſcovered the Secret; for he knew he had told it no-body elſe; and therefore to let them know he was ſenſible of foul Play in the Matter, he with Indignation replied, *If you had not plowed with my Heifer, you could not have expounded my Riddle.*

Then yielding his Wager loſt, he prepared to pay it; and going to *Aſcalon*, a City of the *Philiſtines*, he ſlew thirty Men, whoſe Garments he gave to thoſe that had expounded the Riddle.

Being incenſed againſt the *Philiſtians* for this unfair Dealing about the Riddle, he left *Timnath*, and returned to his Father's Houſe. But tho' he had entertained a juſt Reſentment againſt the *Philiſtines*, yet he retained a Fondneſs for his Wife, to whoſe Weakneſs he did not ſo much impute the Diſcovery of the Riddle, as to the Fraud of her Countrymen.

Some Time after, he returned to *Timnath* to viſit his Wife, and as a Token of his Affection, he brought a Kid with him for a Preſent; and preparing to go to Bed to her; her Father would not permit him, urging for Excuſe, that he thought he ſlighted her, and therefore had given her in Marriage to one of his (*s*) Companions. But if he pleaſed, her youngeſt Siſter, who was more beautiful, was at his Service.

Such a Circumſtance could not fail of exaſperating *Samſon* to a great Degree, and he therefore determined on a ſevere Revenge, which he took care to execute.

Having found Means to catch three hundred (*t*) Foxes, which he tied two

(*s*) Companions. I ſuppoſe to one of the thirty, that they had provided to bear him Company at the Wedding; and, it is very probable, as a Reward of the Treachery in diſcovering the Secret of the Riddle.

(*t*) Foxes. The catching of ſo many Foxes may be queſtion'd by ſome. But it is plain from Scripture, that *Jurea*, and eſpecially that Part of it which was the Portion of the Tribe of *Dan* (to which *Samſon* belonged) abounded with Foxes.

and two together, by the Tails, with lighted Torches to them, and drove them into the ſtanding Corn, by which Means he burnt not only the Corn, but the Vineyards and Olive-trees.

The *Philiſtines* underſtanding it was *Samſon*, Son-in-law to the *Timnite*, that had done this Miſchief, becauſe his Father-in-law had taken away his Wife, came in Revenge to *Timnath*, and burnt *Samſon*'s Wife and her Father.

This gave *Samſon* freſh Occaſion of quarrelling with the *Philiſtines*, and he was ſo far from concealing his Reſentment, or uſing any Stratagem to be revenged on them, that he openly declared he would have Satisfaction, which he forthwith did in a great Slaughter of them.

Samſon perſuaded that ſo rigorous a Proceedure muſt inflame the already incenſed *Philiſtines*; and in order to ſecure himſelf from their Reſentment, took up his Reſidence in the Top of the Rock *Etam*; which when the *Philiſtines* underſtood, they marched into *Judah*, and encamped there, demanding *Samſon* of the Inhabitants, that they might have Satisfaction of him for the Wrong he had done them,

The Men of *Judah* dreading the Conſequence of this Invaſion, immediately detached three thouſand Men of their Tribe, to go and take *Samſon*, and ſay to him, *Didſt thou not know that we are ſubject to the* Philiſtines? *Why then haſt thou provoked them ſo much?* Adding, *that they were come to ſeize, and deliver him to the* Philiſtines.

Samſon knew his own Strength, but would not uſe it againſt his Countrymen; only obliging them by Oath not to ſide with the *Philiſtines* againſt him, he gave them leave to bind him; upon which they brought him to the Place where the *Philiſtines* lay encamped; who ſeeing him brought bound, thought they had him ſecure, and went out ſhouting for Joy to receive him.

But before they could lay Hands on him, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him ſo powerfully, that he broke the Cords of his Arms with as much Eaſe as if they had been burnt Flax; and looking about him for a Weapon, he could find no better than a Jaw-bone of an Aſs: however, being divinely inſpired, he diſpatched a thouſand of the *Philiſtines*.

The Heat of this Action made him ſo exceſſive thirſty, that he was ready to faint, and being in a Place where there was no Water to be had, he addreſſed himſelf to the Lord thus; *Thou haſt given this great Deliverance into the Hand of thy Servant; and ſhall I die with Thirſt, and fall into the Hands of the uncircumciſed.*

God heard his Complaint, and that this miraculous Victory gained by the Hand of one Man, and ſo poorly armed, as with nothing but the Jaw-bone of an Aſs, might not be untainted, he as miraculouſly gratified the Champion's Thirſt, by a Supply of Water from a Rock, which never before pro-

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SAMSON *and* DELILAH. Judges XVI. 21.

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Samſon carrying the Gates of Gaza.

produced any Moiſture; he clave a hollow (*u*) Rock called *Maktes*, which was at *Lehi*, and Water plentifully flowed from it, of which *Samſon* having drank, his Spirit came, and he revived.

The next Evidence of the amazing Power of *Samſon* was at *Geza*, another City of the *Philiſtines*, where he took up his Lodging in a Houſe of public Entertainment.

He was not long conceal'ed here; for the Inhabitants of the Place having Notice of him, beſet the Houſe; and watching for him all Night at the Gate of the City, concluded they ſhould have him in the Morning, and then they would diſpatch him.

Samſon being informed of their Deſign upon him, lay ſtill till Midnight; and then riſing, took the Gates of the City, with the two Poſts and Bars, and laying them on his Shoulders, carried them to the Top of a Hill, which looked toward *Hebron*, and ſo eſcaped the Danger that threatened him.

But a more fatal Danger than this ſoon after befel him; for he falling in Love with a beautiful Woman that lived in the Vale of *Sorek*, whoſe Name was *Delilah*. He was ſo captivated with her Charms, that he had little Regard to his own Safety.

The Princes of the *Philiſtines* obſerving *Samſon*'s Fondneſs, took Advantage of it; and addreſſing themſelves to *Delilah*, promiſing to give her from each of them eleven hundred Shekels of Silver, if ſhe would entice him to diſcover to her wherein his great Strength lay, that ſo they might bind and puniſh him for the great Miſchief he had done them.

So great a Bribe eaſily prevailed with the Woman to betray her Lover, who after much Solicitation, told her, that he had been a *Nazarite* to God from his Birth, and that no Razor ever yet came upon his Head; but if he ſhould be ſhaven, his Strength would be no more than that of a common Man.

Delilah having thus extorted the great Secret from him, ſent for the Princes of the *Philiſtines* to come to her, aſſuring them that he had diſcovered the whole Secret of his Strength to her. They accordingly came and brought the Money they had promiſed her; and ſhe having lulled him to ſleep, as his Head lay on her Lap, a Man whom ſhe had provided, ſhaved off the ſeven Locks of his Head; they rouzing him, ſhe ſaid, *The* Philiſtines *be upon thee*, Samſon!

He not knowing what was done, thought to ſtretch himſelf, as he uſed to do, (for as yet he knew not that the Lord had departed from him) but he too ſoon diſcovered it by the Loſs of his Strength.

The Philiſtines, ſeeing him now really diſabled, ſeized him immediately; and to make ſure of him,

(*u*) Rock. *Joſephus* the Hiſtorian remarks, *Antiq.* l. 7. c. 10. "That God, having heard the Prayer of *Samſon*, made a Fountain to ſpring in a Rock, which did ſend out Abundance of ſweet and clear Water."

Da-

they put out his Eyes, and bringing him to *Gaza*, they fettered him, and made him work in the Priſon.

The *Philiſtines* having apparently vanquiſhed ſo formidable a Foe, uſed their common Method of Feſtivity, and vainly offered Oblations at the Shrine of their God (*x*) *Dagon*.

When they had feaſted awhile, and were grown merry, they called for *Samſon* to make Sport: upon which he was brought from the Priſon, and being placed between the two Pillars that ſupported the Roof, they made themſelves Sport with him.

Beſides the great Conflux of People, that were in the Houſe of *Dagon*, at this Solemnity, there were about three thouſand on the Roof, that came to be Spectators of *Samſon*'s Miſery. By this Time his Hair was ſomewhat grown; and it is probable his Strength began to return.

However, it is very likely theſe Indignities offered him by the *Philiſtines*, provoked him to the higheſt Degree. Wherefore perſuading the Lad that guided him, to ſet him ſo that he might feel both the Pillars on which the Houſe ſtood, on Pretence of leaning on them to reſt himſelf, he, with great Earneſtneſs, prayed to God to ſtrengthen him but this one Time, that he might be revenged of the *Philiſtines* for the Loſs of his Eyes.

God heard his Prayers, and gave him ſuch a wonderful Acceſſion of Strength that taking hold on the two Pillars with both his Hands, he bowed himſelf with all his Might, at the ſame time ſaying, *Let me die with the* Philiſtines!

He exerted his Strength in ſuch a Manner, that forcing the Pillars from their Baſes, the Houſe fell down upon all that were in it. So that *Samſon* had a full Revenge on his Enemies, and put an End to his miſerable Condition, ſlaying more at his Death than in the Heighth of his Strength.

Thus died *Samſon*, who is ſaid to have judged *Iſrael* twelve Years; and was rather a Scourge to the *Philiſtines* than a Deliverer of the *Iſraelites*. Yet he may be ſaid to to have begun to deliver *Iſrael* in this laſt Action, though it coſt him his Life.

When his Relations heard of his Death, they came and brought him to his Father's Sepulchre, between *Zorah* and *Aſhtaol*, where they buried him.

From ſacred Hiſtory, the Conduct of the *Iſraelites*, on the Demiſe of *Samſon*, ſeems to have devolved upon *Eli*, who was then High Prieſt.

In the Beginning of his Reign *Samuel* the Prophet was born, the Son of *Elkanah*, a (*y*) *Levite*, deſcended from *Korah*. He lived in the City

(*x*) *Dagon*. This *Dagon* was the common God of the Sea-Coaſt, having the Form of a Man from the Navel upwards, and downwards of a Fiſh; from which the Word is derived.

(*y*) *Levite*, deſcended, &c. *Elkanah* was deſcended from that *Korah*, who, in *Moſes*'s Time, for his Rebellion in the Wilderneſs, was ſwallowed up by the gaping Earth, and all that he had with him, except his Son, from the eldeſt of which, named *Aſſir*, the Genealogy is drawn down to *Samuel*.

of

of *Ramah*, which belonged to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, with his two Wives, *Hannah* and *Peninnah*. The latter of which had Children, but the firſt none.

Elkanah, according to Cuſtom, once a Year, went up to *Shiloh*, to worſhip and ſacrifice to the Lord, taking his two Wives and his Children with him; where, after he had made his Offerings, he gave Preſents to both his Wives; but *Hannah*, being his beſt beloved, he gave her a double Share of his Favour.

This cauſed a Jealouſy between the two Wives, and *Peninnah* priding herſelf in her Children, reproached *Hannah* for her Sterility. Her Huſband endeavoured to comfort her; but *Hannah* ſought for it from a more powerful Hand, addreſſing herſelf earneſtly in Prayer to the Lord, and vowing at the ſame Time, That if he would bleſs her with a Son, ſhe would dedicate him to the Lord all the Days of his Life, and that no Razor ſhould come upon his Head.

Eli, the Prieſt, ſeeing her Lips move, but not hearing her ſpeak, ſuppoſed ſhe was intoxicated with Wine, and chid her for it; but finding himſelf miſtaken, he turned his Reproof into a Bleſſing, praying to God to hear her Petition.

Being returned to *Ramah*, ſhe conceived, and was in due Time delivered of a Son, whom ſhe named *Samuel*, becauſe ſhe had aſked him of God, which his Name implied.

Hannah, having weaned her little Son, according to her Promiſe, brought him to the Houſe of the Lord at *Shiloh*, with an Offering, acquainted *Eli*, that ſhe was the Woman, that ſome time ſince had prayed to the Lord for a Child, and that ſhe came to perform her Vow, which was to dedicate him to the Service of the Lord.

On this Occaſion *Eli* gave Thanks unto the Lord, for having heard and anſwered *Hannah*'s Prayer; and *Hannah*, in a holy Rhapſody, did the ſame.

Elkanah and *Hannah* having performed their Vow, prepared to return; and *Eli* pronouncing a Bleſſing upon them ſaid, *The Lord give thee Seed of this Woman, for the Loan which is lent to the Lord*, meaning *Samuel*, whom they left behind with *Eli*, who put on him a Linen Ephod, and he ſerved in the Houſe of the Lord, as *Eli* had directed him.

After this, once a Year, till he grew up, his Mother, when ſhe came to offer the yearly Sacrifice, made him a little Coat, and brought it to him.

Eli the Prieſt had two Sons, but very wicked; for valuing themſelves upon the Authority and Dignity of the Prieſthood, they domineered over the Men, and debauched the Women. And to ſuch an height had their Inſolence grown, that not content with the Portion of the Fleſh of the Sacrifice which God had aſſigned them, they would ſeize what they liked beſt, and at what Time they

pleaſed. By this Means the Service of God grew contemptible in the Eyes of the People, who grew indifferent whether they offered or not. But however heinous the Sins of the Prieſts might be, they did not excuſe the People from Guilt, in neglecting the Service of the Lord.

The good old Prophet had often heard of the Conduct of his impious Sons, yet did not reſtrain or puniſh them, as he, that was both Father and Magiſtrate, ought to have done, giving them only a ſlight Reproof, which was ſo far from diſſuading, that they ſtill perſiſted in their wicked Practices.

At laſt a Man of God came to *Eli* with a Meſſage, that threatened him and his Houſhold with Ruin, for his careleſs and mild Adminiſtration. Firſt upbraiding him with Ingratitude, for ſlighting the Honour done his Family, in inveſting the Prieſthood in it, threatening his Sons, *Hophni* and *Phineas* with Death, which he foretold ſhould happen at one and the ſame Time.

And to ſhew *Eli* the wretched Poverty that his Poſterity ſhould fall into, he added, That every one that ſhould be left in his Houſe, ſhould come and crouch to a more faithful Prieſt (whom the Lord would ſet up) for a Piece of Silver, and a morſel of Bread; and ſhall ſay, *Put me, I pray thee, in one of the Prieſt's Office, that I may have a Piece of Bread to eat.*

Soon after this, it pleaſed God to give his old Servant an awful Denunciation of his Judgment by a younger Hand.

Samuel, being lodged in the further Part of the Tabernacle, among the *Levites*, the Lord in the Night called him by his Name, who, as the Manner was, anſwered, *Here am I*; and ſtarting up, ran to *Eli*'s Apartment, ſuppoſing he had called. But when *Eli* told him, he had not called him, he went and lay down again. This was repeated three Times; and *Samuel* began at laſt to be poſitive with *Eli*, that he really did call him.

This rouſed *Eli*, and made him think there was ſomething extraordinary in it; which Thought he communicated to *Samuel*, bidding him go to Bed again; and directing him, That if the Lord ſhould call him again, he ſhould ſay, *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth.*

As *Eli* ſuſpected, ſo it happened; and *Samuel* did as he directed him.

Then ſaid the Lord to *Samuel*. *All that I have ſpoken concerning* Eli *and his Houſe, I will perform; for I have told him, that I will judge his Houſe for ever, for the Iniquity to which he is privy. Becauſe his Sons made themſelves vile, and he did not reſtrain them. Therefore I have ſworn unto the Houſe of* Eli, *that the Iniquity of* Eli's *Houſe ſhall not be purged with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever.*

This Sentence was ſo terrible, even to *Samuel*, tho' he had no Share in it, that he was afraid to tell it *Eli*; but *Eli* now thoroughly awakened, by the Meſſage he had received before, and the

the Apprehenſion he now had, that the Lord had revealed ſomething like it to *Samuel*, obliged him to tell, what the Lord had repeated to him.

Samuel obeyed, and informed him of the whole Truth. To which poor *Eli* humbly ſubmitted, ſaying, *It is the Lord, let him do what he pleaſeth.*

And now to the great Comfort of *Iſrael*, God was pleaſed to appear again in *Shiloh*, and there revealed himſelf to *Samuel*. For as he grew up, both in Stature as a Man, and in Grace as a Man of God, the Lord was with him, and accompliſhed whatever he ſpoke by him; ſo that all *Iſrael* knew, from one End to the other, that *Samuel* was a faithful Prophet to the Lord.

CHAP. XI.

The Iſraelites *are conquered by the* Philiſtines. Eli's *Sons are puniſhed; he breaks his Neck.* Dagon *falls before the Ark of the Lord. On the Repentance of the People, at the Inſtigation of* Samuel, *they conquer the* Philiſtines. Samuel *entertaineth* Saul. *Anoints him Prince over the Lord's Inheritance.* Saul *is choſen by Lot.*

THE *Iſraelites* being again bleſſed with a Prophet, propoſed to themſelves great Things, concluding, that all they now undertook would ſucceed; and therefore being animated with this Thought, they had a Mind to try, if they could not ſhake off the *Philiſtine* Yoke. Wherefore, intending to fight them, they incamped in a Place, which was afterwards, upon better Succeſs, called *Eben-Ezer.*

The *Philiſtines* ſat down by *Aphek*, a City of *Judah*, and in a ſhort Time the Armies joined: but the *Iſraelites*, inſtead of Victory, found the Judgments of God denounced againſt Prieſt and People, ready to fall on them; for in the Action they loſt four thouſand of their Men. The reſt making an orderly Retreat to their Camp, the Elders began to conſider what might be the Cauſe of this Defeat; and fondly ſuppoſing it to be for Want of having the Ark with them, they reſolved for the future to carry it with them in all their other Expeditions.

Then they ſent Meſſengers to *Shiloh*, for *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the Prieſts, to bring the Ark into the Camp; which they forthwith did. And when the *Iſraelites* ſaw the Ark brought into the Camp, they gave ſuch a ſhout, as made the Earth ring, which ſo diſheartened the *Philiſtines*, that they were at the Brink of Deſpair, eſpecially when they heard the true Cauſe of this Rejoicing.

The *Iſraelites* on the other Hand were as Fool-hardy, as the *Philiſtines* were dejected. For, concluding themſelves ſecure, under the Protection of the Ark, and not in the leaſt doubting their Succeſs, they again offered the *Philiſtines* Battle; who in this Engagement, ſlew thirty thouſand of their Foot, among which were *Hophni* and *Phineas*, put the reſt to flight, and

and, which was the terribleſt Blow of all, took the Ark of God.

One of the Soldiers of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, ſeeing the Day loſt, made his Eſcape from the Field of Battle, and came running to *Shiloh* with his Cloaths rent, and Earth upon his Head; which in thoſe Countries were Emblems of extreme Sorrow for the greateſt Loſſes and Misfortunes.

Notwithſtanding old *Eli*'s Default, in his Adminiſtrations, which provoked God, he had a moſt zealous Regard for the Welfare of *Iſrael* and eſpecially the Ark of the Lord. Upon this Account therefore he went and ſat at the Gate to hear (for he could not ſee) how Affairs went: Whilſt he was ſitting here, the foreſaid *Benjamite* that eſcaped in the Fight, having told the Citizens how Things went, there was a mighty Outcry among them. Whereupon, *Eli* aſking what was the Meaning of that Tumult, the *Benjamite* Soldier was brought to him, who told him the *Iſraelites* were routed, his Sons in the Number of the Slain, and the Ark of the Lord taken.

Eli kept his Seat till the laſt Piece of News was told him, but then his Spirits failing, he fell from his Seat backwards; and being heavy as well as old, his Neck broke with the Fall, and he died, having judged *Iſrael* forty Years.

His Son *Phineas* had a Wife at this Time, who being big with-child, and near her Time, hearing of the Death of her Father and her Husband, and the Loſs of the Ark, fell in Labour; and being delivered of a Son, with her dying Breath ſhe named him *Ichabod*; which ſignifies, No Glory, adding, as a Reaſon of giving the Child this Name, *That the Glory is departed from* Iſrael, which ſhe meant by the taking of the Ark of God.

The *Philiſtines* having cleared the Field, and carried off the Plunder, brought the Ark to *Aſhdod*, and plac'd it in the Temple of *Dagon* near to the Idol; whom the next Morning they found fallen down upon his Face before the Ark of the Lord. They ſet him in his Place, and next Day came in again, and not only found him fallen to the Ground, but his Head and Palms of his Hands broken off, and lying on the Threſhold, only his lower Part was left intire. Whence a ſuperſtitious Cuſtom aroſe among the *Philiſtians*, that neither Prieſts, nor People would tread upon the Threſhold.

In order to convince the idolatrous *Iſraelites*, that the Cauſe was no longer between the *Philiſtines* and the *Iſraelites*, but between God and *Dagon*; the Lord laid his heavy Judgments on *Aſhdod*, and all the Coaſt Towns thereabouts, afflicting the People with the Piles, and deſtroying at the ſame time the Country with Mice. The People of *Aſhdod* were ſenſible this was a Judgment from the God of *Iſrael* for taking and detaining the Ark; therefore conſulting what to do, the Princes of the *Philiſtines*, partly to redreſs the Complaints of the *Aſhdodites*, but chiefly to carry the Ark about in Triumph, ſent it to *Gath*, where the ſame Judgments purſued

purſued the Detainers of it. Whereupon they removed it to *Ekron*, but the Inhabitants no ſooner ſaw it, but they cryed out, *They have brought about the Ark of the God of* Iſrael *to ſlay us and our People.*

Whilſt the Ark was here, not only the Piles, but a deadly Plague attended the People; wherefore calling the Prieſts, they reſolved to ſend the Ark away empty, but to prepare a Treſpaſs-Offering for the Atonement of their Sacrilege, which was to conſiſt of five golden Emrods, and five golden Mice, according to the Number of the Princes of the *Philiſtines*; hoping, that by thus acknowledging the Glory of the Lord of *Iſrael*, he would rid them of the Plagues he had inflicted on them: for why, ſaid the Prieſts, ſhould you be obſtinate, as the *Egyptians* were, to your own Deſtruction? Then directing them to provide a new Cart, and two Milch Kine, that never had been yoked, and faſten them to the Cart, without their Calves, they bid them lay the Ark on the Cart, and put the golden Emrods and Mice in a Coffer by the Side of the Ark, and ſend them away; but cautioned them ſtrictly to obſerve which Way the Cart went: for if it went by the Way of *Bethſhemeſh*, they might conclude, that it was the God of *Iſrael* that had plagued them; but if it went not that Way, they ſhould look upon all theſe Judgments only as common Accidents.

The *Philiſtines* ſending the Ark away in this Manner, the Kine that drew it went on lowing directly to *Bethſhemeſh*. The five Princes of the *Philiſtines* followed at a Diſtance to ſee what would become of it; who, when they ſaw it arrive ſafely at *Bethſhemeſh*, returned to *Ekron*. The *Bethſhemites*, who were reaping in the Valley, ſeeing the Ark, were overjoyed.

The Kine having drawn the Cart into the Field of *Joſhua* the *Bethſhemite*, ſtood ſtill there by a great Stone, called the Stone of *Abel*, which the *Levites* ſeeing, they took down the Ark of the Lord, and the Coffer that was in it, and laid them upon the great Stone. Then cleaving the Wood of the Cart to make a Fire with, they offered the Kine for a Burnt-Offering unto the Lord.

But ſome of the *Bethſhemites*, whether moved by Joy or Curioſity, took the Liberty of looking into the Ark, contrary to the Law; for which the Lord ſmote Fifty thouſand and (*c*) threeſcore and ten of them, which ſo terrified the reſt, that they cried out, *Who is able to ſtand before the Holy Lord God? And to whom ſhall he go from us?*

This made them deſirous of re-

(*c*) Threeſcore and ten. Moſt Commentators are of Opinion, that God, to manifeſt his Anger, and his Pity, ſmote only threeſcore and ten men at this Time, and that the fifty thouſand refers to the whole Number of the *Bethſhemites* and not to the Number of thoſe that were ſlain. Be this as it will, we may from hence learn, how extremely dangerous it is to indulge a vain Curioſity of prying in thoſe Myſteries, which God Almighty has thought proper not to diſcloſe to us.

moving the Ark, and ſend to *Kirjath-jeraim*, to acquaint them That the *Philiſtians* had ſent back the Ark of the Lord, and deſired them to come and fetch it.

Accordingly they came, and conveyed the Ark to the Houſe of *Abinadab* on the Hill, whoſe Son *Eleazer* was conſecrated to keep it, where it abode twenty Years.

Samuel, upon the Death of Old *Eli*, and the Loſs of the Ark of God, at this critical Juncture, took upon him the Conduct of the Idolatrous *Iſraelites*. At the End of twenty Years, finding in the People a good Diſpoſition to repent, and return to the Lord, he exhorted them to put away the ſtrange Gods, *Baal* and *Aſhtaroth*, and only to ſerve the Lord; promiſing, That if they would do ſo, they ſhould be delivered from the *Philiſtines*.

Then ordering all *Iſrael* to meet him at *Mizpeth*, they came to him there. Whilſt they humbled themſelves, with Prayer and Faſting, the *Philiſtines* having Notice of this general Meeting, came in Arms, and put them into a great Conſternation.

The *Iſraelites* thus frighted, begged of *Samuel* to intercede for them to the Lord.

Samuel thereupon took a ſucking Lamb, offered it whole for a Burnt-Offering, and prayed to the Lord for *Iſrael*; whoſe Prayers was ſo effectual, that as the *Philiſtines* came to attack *Iſrael*, at that Inſtant, the Lord ſent down ſuch a Peal of Thunder on the *Philiſtines*, juſt as they were ready to engage, as threw them into Confuſion.

The *Iſraelites*, taking Advantage of their Diſorder, gained a mighty Victory, and purſued them from *Mizpeth* beyond *Beth-ſhan*. From which Time the *Philiſtines* came not into the Country of the *Iſraelites*, who recovered the Towns thoſe People had taken from them, from *Ekron* to *Gath*.

Samuel, in Memory of this great Deliverance, ſet up a Monumental Stone, between *Mizpeh* and *Shen*, calling it, *Eben-Ezer*, that is, the Stone of Help.

After this, *Samuel*, for the better Adminiſtration of Juſtice, took a Circuit through *Bethel*, *Gilgal* and *Mizpeh*, returning every Year to *Ramah*. But growing in Years, and unable to travel, he conſtituted his two Sons, *Joel* and *Abiah*, Judges over *Iſrael*; who, degenerating from their good Father, were corrupted with Bribes, and acted unjuſtly.

Upon this, the Elders of *Iſrael* aſſembling, went in a Body to *Ramah*, and complained to *Samuel*. Their Cauſe of Complaint was juſt; but when they took upon them to go farther, and to dictate to *Samuel* how to redreſs it, they forfeited his Love and God's Care.

They wanted, not only their Grievances redreſſed, but to have the Form of their Government altered, inſiſting upon *Samual*'s Inability to govern them, by Reaſon of his great Age, as much as upon the Injuſtice of his Sons. And ſeeing other Nations were governed by Kings, nothing

thing would pleaſe them, but they muſt have a King.

This inſolent Demand was unpleaſing to *Samuel*, who finding he could not diſſuade them, conſulted the Lord; who ordered him to give them a King, as they deſired, but reproached them for their Ingratitude both to him and *Samuel*. And to warn them of the dangerous Conſequences of rejecting him and *Samuel* for a King, he gave him Inſtructions to lay before them what they were to expect from this wanton, fickle Temper: That he ſhould (*d*) enſlave them and their Children, by making them ſubject to all vile Offices; that they ſhould be always in Arms and Tumults, liable to the Inconveniencies of a conſtant War, and attended with heavy Taxes; and that then they ſhould cry to the Lord, but he would not hear them.

Though *Samuel* gave them this ſolemn warning they perſiſted in their Reſolution, poſitively ſaying, *We will have a King over us, that we may be like other Nations,* and that our King may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our Battles.*

Samuel ſeeing them ſo reſolute, again conſulted the Lord about it, who bid him anſwer their Deſire, and make them a King. Upon this *Samuel* diſmiſſed the Elders of *Iſrael* to their Cities; and ſince the ſetting up of a King at that Time, was but to gratify the Humour of a fickle People, God fitted them with a Man extraordinary in his Perſon, being taller by the Head and Shoulders than any of the People. This was *Saul*, the Son of *Kiſh*, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, a handſome Youth.

Kiſh's Aſſes being gone aſtray, he ſent his Son *Saul* with a Servant to †ſeek them; who after much wandering about, came to the Town of *Ramah-Zophim*, *Samuel*'s Reſidence, without hearing any News of what they ſought for. Here *Saul*'s Servant ſaid to him, *There is a* (*e*) *Seer in this Town, who may tell us where the Aſſes are.* *Saul* approved of what

(*d*) Enſlave, &c. This Prediction was verified under the Adminiſtration of *Saul*, who though on his firſt Promotion to the Government of *Iſrael*, he gave Omens of a mild and gentle Reign; in the latter Part, when under the Influence of Jealouſy, and a total Diſtraction of Mind, grievouſly oppreſſed his Subjects, and glutted his full Reſentment with the innocent Blood of Thouſands.

* That we alſo may be like all other Nations. It ſeems plain, their Motives for asking a King were Vanity and Ambition; they thought themſelves inferior to other Nations, becauſe they were deſtitute of the pageantry of State. Their ſenſual Deſires could not be ſatisfied, unleſs they ſaw a Prince ſet over them, ſhining in Gold and Jewels, living in a ſumptuous Palace, attended with Guards richly habited, and appearing in great State; in which they ſuppoſed the Chief Glory of a Land to conſiſt.

† Seek them. He was probably employed in looking after his Father's Cattle; an Employment which was exerciſed by the greateſt Perſonages, in the early Ages: and in *Judea* Aſſes were a conſiderable Part of their Subſtance.

(*e*) *Seer*. So the Prophets were called in thoſe Days.

Before

his Servant propoſed, and went into the Town enquiring for the Seer. God had the Day before given *Samuel* Notice of *Saul*'s coming, and declared to him he was the Perſon whom he had choſen to be King.

Saul meeting there with *Samuel*, who was going up to a High Place to offer Sacrifice, asked him where was the Houſe of the Seer? *Samuel*, underſtanding again that he was the Perſon God had appointed to be King, anſwered, "*I am the Seer: Go up with me to this High Place: You ſhall dine with me to-day, and I will diſmiſs you to-morrow. As for the Aſſes which were loſt three Days ago, be not in Pain for them, they are found again.*" Then he aſſured him, that all the beſt Things in *Iſrael* ſhould be his: And bringing him Home with him, he invited thirty Perſons to bear him Company, ſeating *Saul* above all the other Gueſts, and alſo diſtinguiſhing him, by ſetting before him the beſt of the Meat.

Having entertained *Saul*, *Samuel* took him to a convenient Place of Retirement, and had further Communication with him there that Evening; and early in the Morning calling him up, that he might diſmiſs him, they went out together; and as they were going down towards the End of the City, *Samuel* bid *Saul* order his Servant to go (*f*) before, but ſtand ſtill himſelf for awhile, that he might ſhew him what God had ſaid concerning him.

The Servant being gone out of Sight *Samuel* taking a Vial of (*g*) Oil, poured it upon the Head of *Saul*, and (*b*) kiſſed him: adding, that he did this becauſe the Lord had appointed him a Prince over his Inheritance.

Then as a Token that what he had told him was true, he foretold ſeveral Particulars which ſhould happen to him in his Return. That near *Rachael*'s Tomb, he would meet two Men, who ſhould inform him that his Father's Aſſes were found again; that departing thence, he ſhould meet three Men going to *Bethel*, one of them carrying three Kids, the ſecond three Cakes of Bread, and the third a Bottle of Wine, and that they

(*f*) Before. This was with Deſign to let *Saul* underſtand, that what *Samuel* was about to do was by Divine Appointment; and that when they ſhould come to caſt Lots among all the Tribes, as they after did. *Saul* might not think he was choſen King by the Chance of a *Lot*.

Beſides, there may be another Reaſon for *Samuel*'s bidding *Saul* to ſend away his Servant, viz. leſt the People, ſuſpecting *Samuel* to do this by his own Will more than the Appointment of God, ſhould mutiny. Therefore it was neceſſary that this ſhould not be publiſhed till *Saul* was convinced that he was choſen by God himſelf.

(*g*) Oil. *Saul* was the firſt King of *Iſrael* that was anointed, though Unction was in Uſe before.

(*b*) Kiſſed. This ſignified a Communication of Grace, and a mutual Concord between the Regal and Sacerdotal Offices, a Kiſs being an Emblem of Friendſhip and Peace. *Mariana* will have it to be a Token of Subjection and Homage; but in this Caſe (however it may be in others) it could not be ſo in *Samuel* towards *Saul*; for *Samuel* was Prince and Prophet; and this Act rather ſeems to make *Saul* his Equal, than his Superior.

Some.

ſhould give him two Parts thereof.

And laſtly, that when he came to the Mountain of God, where was a Garriſon of the *Philiſtines*, he ſhould meet a Company of Prophets, going into the City, where (*b*) the Spirit of God ſhould fall upon him, and he ſhould propheſy amongſt them.

After this, he ordered *Saul* to go to *Gilgal*, where in ſeven Days he might expect to ſee him, becauſe there *Samuel* intended to offer a Peace-Offering. All which Signs that *Samuel* had foretold, *Saul* found to happen exactly.

And now, tho' *Samuel* had thus privately anointed *Saul*, which no one knew but themſelves, yet for the general Satisfaction of the People, and that the Choice and Inauguration of the King might be more publick and ſolemn, *Samuel* called them before the Lord at *Mizpeh*, to which Place the Ark of the Lord was brought, that the Choice might be openly made, and declared by caſting Lots among all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, to know from which of them the King was to be choſen.

The Lot fell on the Tribe of *Benjamin*; and caſting the Lot again among the Families of *Benjamin*, the Lot fell upon the Family of *Matri*, and at laſt on *Saul*, the Son of *Kiſh*. *Saul* being before aſſured that the Choice would fall on him, was not preſent at the caſting the Lot; but the People enquiring of the Lord whether they ſhould fetch him or not, he not only conſented, but expreſsly directed them where to find him.

Accordingly they went for him; and having brought him, they ſet him among them, where he appeared taller than all the People from the Shoulders upwards; which *Samuel* obſerving, ſaid to them, *Behold him whom the Lord hath choſen; there is none like him among all the People!* At which Words the People gave a general Shout, ſaying, "God ſave the King."

Then *Samuel* told them the Duty of a King, and the Manner of governing the Kingdom, writing it in a Book, and laid it before the Lord. Which done, he diſmiſſed the People, and *Saul* went home to *Gibeah*, attended with a particular Company of Men, whom God had inclined to wait on him. But there were (*i*) ſome that

(*b*) The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee. The accompliſhment of this Prediction, could not fail of convincing *Saul*, that what the Prophet had done was by the immediate Appointment of God; and that the ſame divine Power who had exalted him to the ſupreme Power of *Iſrael*, would certainly endow him with all thoſe Qualifications neceſſary to the due Execution and Diſcharge of ſo important a Truſt; and ſo it really was, for we are told, *God gave him another Heart*, 1 Samuel, x. 9.

(*i*) Some. Theſe are called Sons of *Belial*, that is, Men of a rebellious, proud, diſobedient Spirit, Who tho' they had deſired a King yet now refuſe him; deſiring what they had not, and deſpiſing what they had. They do not expreſs their Contempt of him by Name, but do it worſe, in a more general way, ſaying, *Shall* He *ſave us?*

were not pleaſed with the Choice, though they had deſired a King, but deſpiſed *Saul*, and would not make any *(k)* Preſents to him; which *Saul* obſerved, but very prudently at that Time *(l)* connived at it.

(*k*) Preſents. Preſenting the King with Gifts was one Way of recognizing him. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe ſays, They came not to ſalute him, which is the ſame Thing; for the firſt Salutation offered to a King was always attended with Preſents, and carried with it a Sign of Peace and Friendſhip, of Congratulation and Joy, and of Subjection and Obedience. It was a general Cuſtom, and ſtill continues among the Eaſtern Potentates, to bring Preſents, and not approach the Throne without them.

(*l*) Connived The *Hebrews* ſay he was deaf, that is, ſeemed or pretended not to hear. In which he was very politick, being unwilling to begin his Reign with any Tumult, which his juſt Reſentment of ſuch an Affront might have occaſioned: If he had taken any Notice of the Affront and not revenged it, he had ſhewn himſelf mean ſpirited; and if he had reſented it, the People might have been apt to charge him with Severity and Cruelty.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

Samuel's *firſt Exploit.* Samuel's *Addreſs to the People.* Saul *conquers the* Philiſtines. *Is reproved by* Samuel *for ſacrificing in his Abſence. Effects of his imprudent Conduct in divers Inſtances. God makes known his Deſign towards* David *to* Samuel. *David is enabled by the divine Strength to perform miraculous Feats of Valour. He excites the Jealouſy of* Saul, *who ſeeks his Life. Is preſerved by* Jonathan.

THE firſt remarkable Action of *Saul*, after his Promotion to the Government of *Iſrael*, was, his Conqueſt over *Nahaſh*, King of the *Ammonites*, who had beſieged (*a*) *Jabeſh-Gilead*, and ſo diſtreſſed the Inhabitants, that in conſequence of the cruel Terms, which he had propoſed for ſhewing them Quarter, which were, that every Man ſhould have his (*b*) right Eye put out. They applied to the King of *Iſrael* to relieve them from ſo tyrannical an Oppreſſor.

The People of *Jabeſh* had no more than (*c*) ſeven Days to call in the Aid of the *Iſraelites*, who in Obedience to the King's Proclamation, muſtered an Army of three hundred thouſand, which together with the thirty thouſand of the Tribe of *Judah*, formed a very powerful Body.

Saul, having diſpoſed his Forces in three Parties, ſurprized the un-

(*a*) *Jabeſh-Gilead.*] This Town lay on the eaſt-ſide of *Jordan*, and not far from the *Ammonites* who beſieged it.

Euſebius and St. *Jerom* tell us, that it exiſted in their Time and was ſituated on a Hill about ſix Miles diſtant from *Pella*.

It is ſometimes in Scripture ſimply called *Jabeſh*.

(*b*) Right Eye. As the Manner of fighting in thoſe Days was chiefly with Bow and Arrow, Sword and Shield, the Loſs of the right Eye rendered them incapable of either.

He did not think proper to put out both their Eyes, becauſe they would then have been utterly incapable of rendering him any Service, or paying him Tribute.

(*c*) Seven Days. He had ſo mean an Opinion of the People, thathe made no difficulty of complying with theirRequeſt.

Saul

prepared *Ammonites*, at the earlieſt Dawn, and charged them with ſuch Fury, that Victory ſoon declared itſelf in his Favour.

This important Conqueſt over ſo formidable and cruel an Enemy, greatly enhanced the Reputation of *Saul*, and induced ſome of his Favourites to requeſt, that he would exert the Power he had now obtained in the Puniſhment of thoſe who had treated him with Indignity at his Election; but the King nobly waved ſuch mean Revenge, nor would ſully the Glory of a memorable Exploit, by the Death of any one *Iſraelite*, for whom amongſt the reſt, the Lord had that Day wrought ſo great Salvation.

Saul's ſignal Succeſs afforded *Samuel*, a very good Opportunity of reconciling a late Difference amongſt the People, by propoſing to them a general Agreement concerning the Validity of his Title to the Government, as well as Confirmation of his Election, by an avowed Recognizance of his Power.

To effect this important Deſign, he ſummoned a general Aſſembly at *Gilgal*, and in a very pathetic Addreſs, firſt appealed to them all, as to the Integrity of his Conduct, during the Time of his Adminiſtration; then charged them with their own Ingratitude, and that of their Anceſtors; and laſtly, aſſured them of the divine Reſentment, that would inevitably follow the Tranſgreſſion of the divine Command, which could be in no Inſtance more flagrant, than in rejecting the Government of God, and him under God, and *(d)* deſiring a King, when the Lord Omnipotent had undertaken to direct them.

To ſtrike them more deeply with a Senſe of their atrocious Crime, *Samuel* called down the preſent Vengeance of their offended God in a Storm of Thunder and Rain, at the Time of (*e*) Wheat-harveſt. This extraordinary Event terrified them in

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Saul, indeed, had been appointed King; but ſo ſmall a Space of Time before, that *Naboſh* was perſuaded he could not levy an Army in ſo ſhort a Space as ſeven Days, and, conſequently, that there was no Danger in granting them the Reſpite they deſired.

(*d*) Deſiring a King. The divine Hiſtorian, having informed us how God conſented to give his People a King, to ſhew us that he had not caſt off the Government, but only transferred the immediate Adminiſtration to a Deputy, and conſequently that their King was his viceroy, tells us here how God was pleaſed to bring them to Repentance in an extraordinary way; the gracious Method he commonly employed, when he intended to Pardon.

(*e*) Wheat harveſt. The Wheat-harveſt began in *Judea* about the end of *June*, or beginning of *July*; in which Seaſon Thunder and Rain were never known, but only in the Spring and Autumn, one called the former, and the other the latter Rain; and therefore *Samuel* intended to convince them that this Phenomenon was really miraculous; and by convincing them of the Omnipreſence of the Deity, and his Readineſs to hear his Prayers, ſhewed them that their Folly and their Wickedneſs were equally great in rejecting God for their King, and himſelf for their Judge.

Three

general, and deeply ſenſible of their Tranſgreſſion, they intreated *Samuel* to implore the divine Mercy, and interceed with God to avert the Judgments they ſo juſtly deſerved.

Rejoiced at the Effect of this miraculous Diſplay of Almighty Power, he not only promiſed Compliance with their Requeſt; but aſſured them that he was ſincerely diſpoſed to inſtruct them in their Duty, the Neglect of which would involve both them and their King in inevitable Deſtruction.

Saul, having obtained a complete Victory over the *Ammonites*, diſmiſſed his Forces, reſerving only three thouſand, two of which he retained at *Michmaſh*, as his own Body-Guard, and appointed the other for the Protection of his Son *Jonathan* at *Gibeah*.

Jonathan being a valiant young Prince, attacked and cut off a Garriſon of the *Philiſtines* in a neighbouring City; and this being deemed an Act of Hoſtility, proved the Cauſe of an open Rupture between that People and the *Iſraelites*.

In order therefore to avenge themſelves of the Injury they had ſuſtained from the King's Son, the *Philiſtines* raiſed a vaſt Army, which beſide an almoſt innumerable Body of Foot conſiſted of (*f*) three thouſand Chariots, and ſix thouſand Horſe, with which they proceeded and encamped at *Michmaſh*.

Saul therefore by ſound of Trumpet muſtered his Forces, and with them encamped at *Gilgal*, impatiently waiting the Arrival of *Samuel*; but as the Prophet tarried longer than was expected, the People were ſo diſheartned by his Delay, that they hid themſelves in Rocks and Caves, and not thinking themſelves ſecure even in thoſe Retirements, paſſed the River *Jordan*.

Saul fearing an Attack from the Enemy, before he had ſent up his Prayer to God, from whom alone he could expect Succeſs, ordered Sacrifices immediately to be made, and the Burnt-offering was juſt finiſhed the Moment that *Samuel* arrived.

As the Prophet had previouſly aſſured him, that he would be with him at *Gilgal* within the Space of ſeven Days, and the Conduct of the King argued both Diſtruſt and Ingratitude; the Prophet ſeverely cenſured his Behaviour, as a heinous Breach of God's Command, by which he would incur the Loſs of his Kingdom, which ſhould be transferred to a more pious Perſon.

Having thus reprimanded the Diſobedience of *Saul*, *Samuel* left *Gilgal*, and repaired to *Gibeah*, where he was followed by the King and his Son with a ſmall Army of about ſix thou-

(*f*) Three thouſand. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* read only three thouſand; but the *Septuagint* and *Chaldee* confirm the printed *Hebrew*.

This Difference might have proceeded, from the Omiſſion or Inſertion of a Cypher in the *Hebrew* or the antient verſions; and if we ſuppoſe that under the term Chariots are comprehended all Sorts of wheeled Carriages, as well as Chariots properly ſo called, the preſent reading of the *Hebrew* may be admitted.

No

ſand Men, and thoſe ſo badly furniſhed with military Accoutrements, that they were reduced to the Neceſſity of uſing their Implements of Agriculture; becauſe the *Philiſtines* had cautiouſly prevented a (*g*) ſingle Smith from reſiding amongſt them.

During the Incampment of the *Philiſtines* at *Michmaſh*, Detachments were ſent out from amongſt them to plunder the Country; and they continued their Depredations ſometime unoppoſed; till *Jonathan* happily inſpired with a religious Confidence and genuine Patriotiſm, privately withdrew from the Camp, attended by his Armour Bearer only, to whom he had imparted his Deſign, (*h*) and found Means to aſcend a ſteep and craggy Rock, which as ſoon as they had ſurmounted, they fell moſt furiouſly on the *Philiſtines*, who had not the laſt Apprehenſion of an Invaſion, and through their great ſurpriſe, ſlew twenty of their inveterate Foes. This intrepid Attack from only two Men, put the *Philiſtines* into ſuch Conſternation, that not diſtinguiſhing Friends from Enemies, they fell upon each other's Swords, and thus became the Inſtruments of their own Deſtruction.

As ſoon as *Saul* received intelligence of this Confuſion in the Enemy's Camp, he immediately availed himſelf of the favourable Opportunity, and fell upon the diſordered *Philiſtines* with ſuch Fury, that he put them to a total Defeat.

But he was unhappily guilty of another flagrant Breach of Piety and Prudence after this auſpicious Event; for determined on a vigorous Purſuit of the Enemy, he prohibited his People on the ſevere Penalty of Death, from taking my Refreſhment before night, leſt they might be prevented from maſſacreing their vanquiſhed Foes. This raſh Determination deprived him of every Advantage that would otherwiſe have reſulted from the Victory; for his People enfeebled

(*g*) Single Smith. The *Philiſtines*, during their forty Years Tyranny, had taken care to carry away all the Smiths out of the Country, to prevent them from making themſelves Weapons of War; but if it ſeems ſtrange, that, after the total overthrow of the *Philiſtines* at *Eben-ezer*, the *Iſraelites* ſhould neglect to reſtore thoſe Artificers, and to furniſh themſelves with Weapons; it ſhould be remembered, that thoſe Trades, when once loſt, are not ſo eaſily recovered; eſpecially among a People extremely addicted to Sloth and Negligence, deſtitute of Iron mines, and wholly intent upon the feeding of Cattle.

(*h*) Deſign. How *Jonathan* and his Armour-Bearer only, could put the whole Army of the *Philiſtines* into ſo univerſal a Conſternation, appears, at firſt Sight, very extraordinary; but when we conſider, that they climbed up a Way never before attempted,—that they ſurpriſed the Enemy unawares, and perhaps when the greateſt Part of them were aſleep,—that this Army, being conpoſed of different Nations, might entertain Jealouſies and Suſpicions of each other,—and that the Darkneſs of the Night, might make them apprehend, the whole Body of the *Iſraelites* was come upon them alone, the Fright of the *Philiſtines* is not ſo very ſurpriſing: and when we add to all this, what is not indeed improbable, that God might at this Inſtant infuſe a panic Fear into the whole Hoſt, our Wonder will be turned into Praiſe and Adoration, of that powerful Being, who, when he ſees fit, can make the greateſt Heroes tremble, and put to flight the moſt formidable Armies.

by want of Sustenance, were obliged to desist from the Pursuit, and thereby afforded the Enemy an Opportunity of escaping to their own Country.

To aggravate the Ills consequent on this misguided Prohibition; the pious and valiant *Jonathan*, had well nigh fallen a Victim to his Father's rash Vow; for being absent from the Camp at the time of the Proclamation and therefore ignorant of it, he eat a little *(i)* Honey when almost famished, and would have undergone the cruel Sentence, had not the People pleaded in his behalf the important share he had in acquiring the Honours of the Day.

Saul elated with his Success wantonly resolved to pursue the Enemy by Night; but *Samuel* advised him to seek Direction of God before the Execution of his Proposal; so that this scheme was entirely given up.

Notwithstanding many Improprities in point of Government, he still maintained his regal Authority, and the Lord had appointed him to an Expedition, which if executed according to his Directions, would in some Measure have atoned for past Miscarriages. The Lord had many Years before determined to execute his Judgment on the *Amalekites* for opposing the *Israelites* in their passage out of the Land of *Egypt*.

Samuel was therefore sent by God, with a Commission to *Saul* in the most peremptory terms, to extirpate the whole Race of the *Amalekites*, Men, Women and Children, and with them every living Creature, that could minister to Use or Sustenance: but instead of punctually complying with the divine Command, *Saul* with his usual Impiety, partially *(k)* saved *Agag* King of that People, together with the best of his Cattle and many valuable Commodities; and when *Samuel* remonstrated with him on the Iniquity of his Conduct, to exculpate himself, pretended that he had spared them from the pious Motive of offering them as Sacrifices to the Lord.

But the Prophet assured that this Reserve proceeded from a Principle

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(i) A little Honey. This was Wild Honey, which is now to be found in great Abundance in the Deserts of the Holy Land.

(k) Saved *Agag*. The Extirpation of the *Amalekites* had been determined by God above four hundred Years before this Transaction *Balaam* in his Vision confirms this Doom.

The Order to cut them entirely off was renewed by God several Years afterwards, and agreeable to this Order, *Saul* set out on this Expedition. It may be observed also, that they continued inveterate Enemies to the *Hebrews*, and joined with their Adversaries, whenever they could, to enslave and destroy them; particularly with the *Midianites*, Judge. vi. 2, 3. 33 Nay this very Order to *Saul*, utterly to destroy them, seems to have been given, because they had, together with *Moab*, *Edom*, the Kings of *Zobah*, and the *Philistines*, invaded and spoiled them; Chap. xiv. 48.

The *Israelites*, therefore, had a right to revenge themselves on them, as they were Aggressors by the Law of Nature and Nations, and utterly to extirpate them too, if that was necessary for their own Preservation; and were obliged to do it, if God commanded them.

God did command it. And will any Man dispute the Right of God to destroy an incorrigible Nation, by Pestilence, Earthquake, Storm or Famine? As no sensible Person can deny this, how then can he deny the Right of God to destroy them by the Sword.

Make

of Avarice rather than Piety, would not admit of ſo vain a Pretence; firſt ſet before his View the heinous Nature of his Tranſgreſſion, and then declared to him God's awful Determination of transferring the Kingdom from his Family to a more worthy Race, which ſhould punctually obey every Command of the King of Kings.

Impreſſed by this Declaration, the guilty King, confeſſed his Crime, earneſtly begged the pious Prophet, to deprecate in his Behalf the divine Vengeance, and (*l*) make Interceſſion for him; and alſo to enhance his Reputation among the People (who were ripe for Rebellion) to join with him in the ſolemn Worſhip of God.

Samuel would not join in Worſhip with one who had rejected the Word of the Lord, and therefore prepared to depart, when *Saul* caught hold of the Skirt of his Mantle; whereupon *Samuel* propheſied, That the Lord in like Manner had rent the Kingdom from him.

At length however, *Samuel* was induced, by his hearty Contrition, to comply with his Requeſt: but before he departed, he inſiſted that *Agag* (who began to entertain Hopes of being ſpared) ſhould be brought to him; which being done, he (*m*) fell upon him; and with his own Hand, hewed him in Pieces before the Lord.

After this Tranſaction *Samuel* departed to his own Habitation at *Ramah*; *Saul* repaired to his Reſidence at *Gibeah*, and this proved the laſt Interview between the King and the Prophet.

Such was the Regard of pious *Samuel* for the unhappy *Saul*, that tho' he viſited him no more, he did not fail (*n*) to lament the deplorable State into which he had fallen.

But during his melancholy Reflection, the Lord was pleaſed to reprove him for mourning over one whom he had rejected for his Diſobedience, and ordered him to repair to *Bethlehem*, under Pretence of Sacrificing there, to invite *Jeſſe* and his Sons to the Feaſt of the Sacrifice, and do as he ſhould there direct him.

Samuel inſtantly obeyed the divine Command, and being demanded on his Approach to *Bethlehem*, whether he came with good Intent, he anſwered, That he came in Order to hold a Feaſt of Sacrifice unto the Lord.

Having made the neceſſary Pre-

(*l*) Make Interceſſion. The Vulgate renders, "Bear my Sin;" the *Septuagint* and *Arabic*, "Take away my Sin." By Sin is meant the Puniſhment due to his Sin; and his Requeſt to *Samuel* is, to pray to the Deity for him that he might eſcape that Puniſhment.

(*m*) Fell upon, &c. *Agag* was a cruel Tyrant; his Sword had made Havock amongſt his own People as well as amongſt the *Iſraelites*, and his Barbarity called aloud for publie Juſtice. *Saul* had refuſed to do this Act of Juſtice, and in ſparing him he was guilty of a Violation of a Command of God: *Samuel* therefore juſtly ordered him to be ſlain that Inſtant.

(*n*) To lament, &c. He had a ſincere Value for his Country, and therefore could not help lamenting the ſad Condition of its King.

Armour

parations, he particularly invited *Jeſſe* and his Sons; after which, repairing to his Houſe, and obſerving *Eliab* the eldeſt to be a goodly Perſon, he ſuppoſed him, at firſt Sight, to be the Perſon appointed by God to ſucceed *Saul* in the Government of *Iſrael*.

But being inſtructed otherwiſe by God, and finding that *Jeſſe* had another Son, who was watching the Sheep in the Field, he deſired he might be immediately ſent for, being determined not to inſtitute the Feaſt before his Arrival.

When the Youth came, *Samuel* perceived by his comely, yet innocent Look, that he was the very Perſon appointed by God to that high Office, and therefore, according to the divine Inſtruction, he ſingled him out from the reſt of his Brethren, (*o*) poured Oil on his Head, and anointed him.

From that very Inſtant, *David* was endowed with the Spirit of the Lord, with Prudence, Courage, and every Ornament of Body and Mind, neceſſary to compoſe a great Prince.

As *David* daily grew in the Favour of the Lord, *Saul* declined more and more, the Spirit of God departed from him, and his mind was agitated by the moſt perplexing Reflections on his dire Circumſtances, which frequently deprived him of his Reaſon, and threw him into an abſolute Frenzy.

To alleviate his Grief, ſome of his Attendants, adviſed him to have Recourſe to Muſic, to which, when he conſented, one of them recommended *David* to him, aſſuring him, he was not only an excellent Muſician, but poſſeſſed of every Qualification of Body and Mind, that could engage his Favour; and above all, that the Lord was with him.

In Conſequence of the Advice of his Attendants, the Youth was brought into the Preſence of *Saul*, and *Jeſſe* knowing the Cuſtom of the Court, had provided him with a handſome Preſent, with which, on Delivery the King was much pleaſed, but charmed with his Skill on the Harp, which for the preſent, diverted his melancholy Thoughts.

Saul at Length conceived ſuch Eſteem for *David*, that having obtained his Father's Conſent to his continuing with him, in order to attach him to his Service, he made him his Armour-bearer.

The *Philiſtines*, who had lately ſuſtained a total Defeat from the Ar-

(*o*) Poured Oil. He ſingled him out from the reſt, and privately anointed him; for it is plain, from what is ſaid before, that *Samuel* was afraid to have it known, and therefore did not anoint him publickly in the midſt of his Brethren. And by *Eliab*'s Treatment of *David* after this, Chap. xvii. 28. it is evident, that he did not know him to be anointed King over *Iſrael*.

David himſelf might be as ignorant of the preciſe Intention of *Samuel* in this Ceremony as his Brethren, becauſe it was cuſtomary to anoint a Perſon for the *prophetic* Office as well as the *regal*.

Samuel's not revealing this Secret to *David* ſhewed his Prudence, becauſe, if it had got Wind before the proper Criſis, it would have endangered both their Lives.

my of *Saul*, having now collected their ſcattered Forces, appeared again in a Diſpoſition that portended their Deſign of avenging the late Hoſtilities of the *Iſraelites*, being incamped between *Succoth* and *Azekah*, while *Saul*, with his Forces, pitched their Tent upon an Eminence above the Valley of *Elah*, which ſeparated the two Armies.

While the *Iſraelites* and the *Philiſtines* lay incamped oppoſite each other, a (*q*) Champion, of ſtupendous Bulk and Stature, called *Goliah*, came out of the *Philiſtine*'s Camp, for forty Days ſucceſſively, and challenged any one of the whole Army of the *Iſraelites* to (*r*) ſingle Combat, which ſhould abſolutely decide the Fate of either Army.

This *Philiſtine Coloſſus*, was near ten feet high, and his Limbs extremely Muſcular and Nervous, inſomuch that he ſtruck every Beholder with Terror, as well as Aſtoniſhment, and none durſt accept his Challenge, which he preſumptuouſly offered for ſo long a Succeſſion of Time.

At length however the provident Defender of *Iſrael* raiſed his own People a Deliverer, in the Perſon of young *David*, who happened at that Time to come to the Camp with Proviſion for his elder Brethren, who were then in the Service.

David obſerving this gigantic *Philiſtine* inſolently taunt the whole Army of *Iſrael*, and hearing the prodigious Reward the King had promiſed to any one who ſhould ſlay him; viz. that he was to give him his own Daughter in Marriage, and enoble his Family by conferring on them the Freedom of *Iſrael*, was diſpoſed, as it were, by a divine Impulſe, to encounter this daring, formidable Hero.

His elder Brother *Eliab*, thinking the very Pretence, an Inſtance of the higheſt Preſumption, took occaſion to reprimand him, for his Raſhneſs. But *David* waved his Brother's Choler, by addreſſing himſelf to another Man, and expreſſing a ſteady Zeal and unſhaken Intrepidity for the Cauſe of God, as well as utter Contempt of the inſolent Boaſtings of the haughty *Goliah*.

The Reſolution of this favourite Youth, at length reached the Ears of the King, who ſent for him, and from a Motive of real Concern, ſet before him the Danger he muſt inevitably incur by encountering with a Man of *Goliah*'s prodigious Skill, and long military Experience.

But *David*, to obviate the King's Suſpicion, informed him that he had performed Exploits full as daring as that of engaging with the preſent

(*q*) A champion. The *Hebrew* is, *Iſh habbanain*; which the Vulgate renders, *One of ſpurious Birth*; the Giants being noted for having no Regard to the Matrimonial Contract, or Virginity.

(*r*) Single Combat. This ſeems to have been merely a Bravado, ariſing from too great an Opinion of his own Strength, without any Authority from the *Philiſtine* Army, ſince, after he was ſlain, they did not ſubmit to be Slaves to the *Iſraelites*, as he had declared they would, in caſe he was vanquiſhed.

Sin-

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DAVID with the HEAD of GOLIATH. *1 Sam.l Ch. 17. V. 57.*

Philiſtine, that he had ſlain a Lion and a Bear with his own Hand, and now relied on the ſame Almighty Arm to enable him to vanquiſh the inſolent Foe, who had ſet at Defiance the Armies of God.

The King greatly applauding the pious and brave Reſolution of *David*, ordered him to be arrayed in his own Armour; but finding that upon Trial unfit for him, it was put off; and he took his Staff in his Hand, and choſe five ſmooth Stones, which together with his Sling, compoſed his offenſive Weapons.

Thus prepared, he boldly advanced towards his powerful Antagoniſt, who thinking from his Youth and diminutive Stature, he was oppoſed to him from meer Contempt and Deriſion, could not refrain from curſing him, and threatened at once to diſpatch him.

But *David* proceeded not in that ſelf-ſufficient Manner, for, on the contrary, he aſſured the *Philiſtine*, that he undertook not to encounter him in his own Strength, but that of the mighty God of *Iſrael*, whoſe Name he had blaſphemed, and whoſe Armies he had impiouſly defied; and farther, as a Proof of his Confidence in the divine Aid and Direction, he told him, that he ſhould deprive him of his Head, and give his Body for Food to the Fowls of the Air, and the Beaſts of the Field; and that he ſhould be enabled to perform that Exploit, in order to demonſtrate to an infidel World, the Exiſtence and Power of an Almighty Jehovah, even the God of *Iſrael*.

Nor did he rely on the Strength of his God in vain; for ſtanding at a convenient Diſtance from the *Philiſtine*, he diſcharged from his Sling a Stone, which ſtruck *Goliah* on his Forehead, pierced his Brain, and there remained, ſo that he fell upon his Face; and *David*, who had no Sword, ran up, caught hold of the Giant's, and immediately ſevered his Head from his Body, to the general Joy of the *Iſraelites*, and their Allies, and the utter Confuſion of the *Philiſtines*, who fled before the former, by whom they were purſued unto the Gates of *Ekron*, with great Slaughter.

CHAP. II.

Saul *firſt promotes* David, *and afterwards, through Jealouſy, ſeeks his Life. The ſtricteſt Friendſhip is formed between* David *and* Jonathan, *who concert divers Meaſures to preſerve him from the Fury of his Father. The Scheme he had laid to trepan him is defeated by the Stratagem of* Michal. Saul *endeavours to ſlay his Son.* David *ſeeks Protection from the King of* Achiſh. *Inſtance of* Saul's *cruel Reſentment.* David's *Succeſs againſt his Enemies. Death of the Prophet* Samuel.

SAUL aſtoniſhed at the mighty Feat performed by this young Hero, enquired of *Abner*, one of his

his Generals, whoſe Son he was? But *Abner* not being able to reſolve him, introduced *David* to the King, with the Champion *Goliah*'s Head in his Hand.

The King beſtowed the higheſt Praiſes on his Valour, and deſiring to know whoſe Son he was? He modeſtly reply'd, *I am the Son of thy Servant* Jeſſe, *the* Beth-lemite.

The late glorious Action excited the general Eſteem of the *Iſraelites* and their Allies; but none evinced ſuch ſanguine Approbation as *Jonathan*, who being a Prince of innate Valour, and intrepid Fortitude, was ſo charmed with his Proweſs in the important Execution, that he entertained the (*w*) ſincereſt Friendſhip for him, which being mutually cemented by the moſt endearing Ties, ratified by Covenant, and *Jonathan*'s preſent of his Robe, Sword, Belt and Bow to *David*, remained as long as they lived together.

David, for a ſhort Time after this Exploit, received a peculiar Token of *Saul*'s Favour, and was appointed to the Command of his Men of War, which he filled with Honour, Prudence and Reputation.

But *Saul's* Reſpect for *David* continued not long, for a Circumſtance ſoon fell out, that excited in his ſuſpicious Mind, the moſt burning Jealouſy.

As *David* was returning from the Slaughter amongſt the vaſt Concourſe aſſembled to behold the Entry of their triumphant Countrymen, was a Company of Women, who accompanied muſical Inſtruments with a Song, the chief Burthen of which was, Saul *has ſlain his thouſands, and* David *his ten-thouſands.*

This ſuggeſted to *Saul*'s Remembrance, what the Prophet *Samuel* had told him, and as well as excited his Fears, that *David* aſpired after his Throne; on which Account he baniſhed from his Mind every Sentiment of Good-will, and in its Room, conceived the moſt miſerable Revenge againſt the pious, brave and innocent Youth.

From this very Inſtant, *Saul* reſolved on his Deſtruction, which he endeavoured the next Day to effect with his own Hand. His Mind being greatly perplexed, *David* as uſual came to divert his Melancholy; and while he was playing the Harp before him, not ſuſpecting the leaſt Danger, the frantic King darted a Javelin at him with all his Might; but as *David* was reſerved by Providence, for wiſe Purpoſes, the King miſſed his Aim, and *David* immediately withdrew.

After this remarkable Event, *David* was removed from his immediate Attendance on the King's Perſon, and degraded to an inferior Poſt in the Army, which he filled as much to his own Honour, and the Approbation of his People, as

(*w*) Sincereſt. His Friendſhip for him was founded upon the Comlineſs of Perſon, his Skill and Courage in ſlaying the Philiſtine, and his Modeſty when he appeared before Saul his Father.

Slew

DAVID playing before SAUL. I. Sam. 16. 23.

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he had done the first Offices of State.

David's Conduct in an inferior Station, and the Reputation which he thence acquired, inflamed the Jealousy of *Saul*, and prompted him studiously to endeavour at his Destruction.

By Virtue of the King's solemn Promise, previous to the Encounters with the *Philistine* Giant, *David* had an undoubted Claim to one of his Daughters in Marriage; but meek in Temper, he rested content with the Honours already conferred upon him; nor had *Saul* conceived any Intention of fulfilling that Part of his Promise, till he thought it might prove the most effectual Method of sating his implacable Revenge.

Accordingly, sending for *David*, he informed him of his Design to bestow his Daughter upon him, as a Condition of his executing a Commission that was attended with the utmost Hazard of his Life.

David modestly evaded the proposed Honour, alledging the Meanness of his Family. *Saul* therefore embraced this Opportunity of avoiding Compliance with his Promise, and gave his elder Daughter *Morah* in Marriage to *Adriel*, the Son of *Barzillia*.

Michal, *Saul*'s second Daughter, had conceived a real Affection for *David*, of which the King being conscious; and in order to prosecute his former malicious Scheme, he promised her in Marriage to him, desiring no other Compensation than that he should slay an hundred *Philistines*, and produce their Fore-skins in Court before him.

David imagining that the King was desirous of putting his Valour to the test once more, without the least Suspicion of the latent Malice of the Terms, readily acquiesced, and selecting some of the best Men in the *Israelitish* Army, marched at their Head, attacked the *Philistines*, (y) slew double the Number stipulated by the King, within the time he had prescribed, and as an undeniable Testimony of his having fulfilled the terms, presented their Foreskins at Court; so that having thus gallantly accomplished all Things, the King could not refuse him his Daughter, who rewarded his Merit with the purest Affection.

Various Circumstances combining to inflame the Jealousy and Resentment of *Saul*, he cast off all Disguise, engaged his whole Family in executing his malicious Design, and commanded *Jonathan* his Son, and all his Attendants by any Means to dispatch the detested *David*.

Jonathan, whose Soul disdained such Ingratitude and Inhumanity to any deserving Person, much more towards his avowed Friend, took Care to give him timely Notice of the threatning Storm, advising him to retire to some secure Place till the

(y) *Slew double.* *Josephus* make *Saul*'s Demand, and the Number which *David* brought to be Six Hundred. The *Septuagint*, instead of Two hundred, read One Hundred, in order to make it correspond with the Number which *Saul* demanded.

Morning, when he would take an Opportunity of expoſtulating with his Father, and tranſmit to him a particular Account of his Succeſs. *Jonathan* according to his Propoſal, ſet before his Father both the Unreaſonableneſs and Impiety of his Deſign upon innocent *David*, who merited every good Office at his Hands; that *Saul* according to outward Appearance was reconciled to *David*, and *Jonathan* next Day introduced him into his Preſence, in the ſame reſpectable Light as before.

But as the Renown of *David*'s Exploits in divers Conqueſts over the *Philiſtines* ſpread daily, and conſequently added fuel to the Reſentment ſtill latent in the Breaſt of *Saul*, a ſhort Time proved this Reconciliation to be meer Pretence. Of this he gave evident Demonſtration, for being ſeized with another Fit of Melancholy, *David* was ſent for to play to him, and as before, while he was innocently endeavouring to amuſe him, he again darted a Javelin at him, which *David* avoided by nimbly changing his Situation, and afterwards made his eſcape; but to the Rancour of his Deſign it is recorded that he ſmote the Javelin in the Wall.

Enraged at theſe repeated Diſappointments, he commanded a Detachment of his Guards, to beſet his Houſe at Day-break and ſlay him. But *Mical*, his Wife, acquainted him with the Deſign, and propoſed to let him down from a Window; which being done, by Favour of the Night, he once more eſcaped the malicious Deſign of *Saul*; and to prevent the Suſpicion of the Guards, *Michal* told them he was ſick in Bed, having artfully ſubſtituted in his Room an Image, with which the King was much incenſed; but his Daughter pleaded the moſt juſtifiable Cauſes for her Conduct.

David haſtened, as much as the Night would permit him to his Friend and Counſellor, *Samuel* at *Ramah*, to whom he communicated the Particulars of what had paſſed between him and *Saul*, hoping that God by this Means might direct him how to proceed in his intricate Situtation.

At the Advice of the Prophet, for his better Security, he repaired together with him to (*b*) *Naioth*, where they both lived ſome Time.

But the Emiſſaries of the enraged King no ſooner informed him of the Place to which *David* had repaired for Security, that notwithſtanding the Sanctity of the Place, he ſent a Party to apprehend him. But when they arrived at the ſacred Place, and heard *Samuel* inſtructing the other Prophets, they were ſeized with a Prophetic Spirit, and returned not.

After theſe other Meſſengers were diſpatched; but they no ſooner approached the venerable Spot, than

(*b*) *Naioth.* The Chaldee renders this as if it was an Appellative, "The School of Learning." This was the famous School of the Prophets.

The

they were affected in the ſame Manner with the former.

Having proceeded in this Manner three Times ſucceſſively, and received no ſatisfactory Intimation, he at length went down himſelf: but when he drew near *Naioth*, he was influenced by the ſame divine Power, and continued to prophecy, till he reach'd the Place where *Samuel* and *David* had retired, when ſtripping off his upper Garment: he humbly lay on the Ground that Day and the enſuing Night.

David availed himſelf of this Opportunity of leaving *Saul* at the School of the Prophets, eſcaping to his Friend *Jonathan*, and conſulting with him how to avert the Reſentment of his Father, who thus indefatigably ſought his Life.

Jonathan not only aſſured him of his beſt Services, but that he would take every poſſible Meaſure to diſcover the Intention of his Father, and immediately acquainted him therewith: but to ſtrengthen his Confidence in him, he ſolemnly renewed the Covenant of Friendſhip that was between them; and having directed him to conceal himſelf in a certain Place for a few Days, till he could judge whether he ſhould ſtill lay hid, or might with Safety again appear in public, which he was to ſignify by ſhooting an Arrow; they cordially embraced, and then parted.

As the Seaſon approached for the Celebration of the *(e)* Feaſt of the New Moon, *Saul*, according to Cuſtom, came from *Naioth* to attend that Solemnity; and after he was ſeated, taking a View of the Company, he obſerved that *David*'s Place was vacant, for two Days ſucceſſively. This occaſioned him to enquire the Cauſe, wherefore the Son of *Jeſſe* (a Title of Contempt) abſented himſelf from the Feaſt.

Jonathan anſwered his Father in Excuſe for his Friend, that he had obtained from him Leave of Abſence, in order to be preſent at the anniverſary Feaſt, held by his own Family at *Bethlehem*.

Saul who well knew the inviolable Friendſhip that ſubſiſted between *David* and his Son, and ſuſpected that what he urged in his Excuſe was meer Pretence, moſt rancourouſly upbraided him with taking into his Boſom, one who endeavoured to ſupplant him and his Family, in that which they held moſt dear, was the Throne of *Iſrael*; inſiſting at the ſame Time, that he ſhould bring him before his Preſence, as he was reſolutely determined on his Death.

So noble, ſo generous was the Friendſhip of *Jonathan*, that notwithſtanding this flagrant Inſtance of his Father's invetred Hatred againſt

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(e) The Feaſt of the New Moon. The *Iſraelites* performed ſolemn Sacrifices every new Moon, and after the Sacrifices feaſted together: and David, being one of the King's Family, by marrying his Daughter, uſed to eat with him on theſe Occaſions; and he thought that *Saul*, by being inſpired by the Spirit of God at *Naioth*, might poſſibly have forgot his Anger, make a favourable Enquiry after him.

Threw

the Object of it, he ſtill interpoſed in his Behalf, enquiring of him, what *David* had done to deſerve Death?

This Behaviour in *Jonathan* ſo incenſed his Father, that forgetting the Ties of natural Affection, in the Vehemence of his Frenzy, he *(f)* threw a Javelin at his Son, cruelly deſirous of avenging on him the frequent Diſappointments of his Deſigns upon *David*.

But *Jonathan* avoided the Stroke, and perſuaded from his Conduct, and even Confeſſion, of the Continuance of his Reſolution upon the Life of *David*, he went next Morning with his Bow into the Field, gave the Signal for his Friend to appear, and having communicated to him what had paſſed between him and his Father, as well as warned him, at all Events, to eſcape for his Life; they renewed their Proteſtations of eternal Friendſhip, (*g*) embraced, and departed.

David thus warned by his Friend *Jonathan*, betook himſelf to *Nob*, a City belonging to the Prieſts, where ſtood the Tabernacle at that time, in order to enquire of the Lord by Means of *Ahimelech* the Prieſt, what courſe he ſhould take in his preſent wandering.

Ahimelech who knew the dignity of his Rank, but was ignorant that he was out of Favour with the King, expreſſed his Surpriſe at his arriving thus unattended: *David* concealed the true Cauſe, and pretended to the High Prieſt, that he was diſpatched by the King on a Secret Expedition in ſuch haſte; that he had neither Time to furniſh himſelf with Arms nor Proviſion, deſiring at the ſame Time, he would ſpare him ſome or whatever Food was at Hand. *Ahimelech* informed *David*, that at preſent he had no common Bread, but as the caſe was urgent he gave him ſome conſecrated Bread. Having thus appeaſed his Hunger, *David* enquired if he had any Arms in his Poſſeſſion; upon which he offered him (*h*) *Goliah*'s Sword, the moſt acceptable Weapon with which he could have preſented him, as he himſelf acknowledged there was none like it.

David having thus found Means to procure ſome Neceſſaries from *Ahimelech*, departed from *Nob*, having received Intelligence, that *Doeg*, the King's Huntſman was there; who

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(f) Threw a Javelin. *Saul* had always a Javelin or Spear at hand to execute his evil Purpoſes, becauſe Spears were the Scepters of thoſe Ages, which Kings always carried in their Hands.

(*g*) Embraced. This adieu is the moſt pathetic and tender that ever was deſcribed. There was Reaſon for *David* to exceed in Sorrow, as he was now to become an Exile from his Friends, from his Wife, from his Parents, from his Kindred, from the People of God, and from all ſacred Solemnities.

(*h*) *Goliah*'s Sword. Though the Sword of *Goliah* was depoſited in this ſacred Place, it is much to be queſtioned whether it was placed here as a Trophy, becauſe Trophies were generally hung up in ſome conſpicious Place, which this was not; and if it was not dedicated to God as a ſacred Trophy, *David*'s taking it away could not be ſaid to be a Profanation.

Adullam

would certainly diſcloſe the Interview to *Saul*. Diffident of his Security in any Part of *Saul*'s Dominions he proceeded to *Gath*, but remained not long there before he was diſcovered and pointed at as the mighty Warriour of *Iſrael*, who had ſo frequently ſignalized himſelf againſt the *Philiſtines*; ſo that to prevent Information, he feigned Inſanity, and ſuſtained the Part of a Lunatic, which he aſſumed, with ſuch Skill and Addreſs, as evaded the Suſpicion of the King, and gave him an Opportunity of flying to *(i) Adullam*, where he was viſited by all his Relations, and applied to by about four hundred Men, Male-Contents and Deſperadoes, to take the Lead of them, who would reſolutely follow his Fortune, whitherſoever he went. Pious *David*, after his Family had thus joined him, fearing that the reſentment of *Saul* would fall upon his aged Parents from a filial Concern for their Safety, put both himſelf and them under the Protection of the King of *Achiſh*, who was then at Enmity with *Saul*.

With this Prince they dwelt untill the Prophet of *Gad* (who attended *David*) adviſed him to quit *Moab*, and return to the Land of *Judah*, where he departed, aud took up his Station in the Foreſt of *Hareth*.

It appeared at this Time that *Saul* was at *Ramaſh*, and having received Intelligence of the People, who had enliſted under the Banner of *David*, he upbraided his Attendants with Want of Loyalty, in that none of them would aſſert his Cauſe againſt the Son of *Jeſſe*, who, together with his Son, had conſpired againſt his Perſon and Government.

The People to whom he addreſſed himſelf, conſcious of their Innocence, made no Reply; but *Doeg*, who had ſeen *David* with *Ahimelech*, the High-Prieſt, *(k)* gave *Saul* Information of every particular Circumſtance that had paſſed between them.

Saul willing to embrace any Pretence, in order to avenge himſelf on *David*, or any that were attached to his Cauſe, ſummoned *Ahimelech*, and all the Prieſts, who were in *Nob*, to appear before him. The Prieſts not ſuſpecting the King's cruel Deſign, obey'd the Royal Mandate, and as ſoon as they came into his Preſence, he adreſſed himſelf more particularly, to *Ahimelech*, demanding of

(i) *Adullam*. *Adullam* was a Town in the Tribe of *Judah*, of conſiderable Note: and near it was a Rock of the ſame Name, in which was a Cave naturally ſtrong and fortified, and into this Cave *David* retreated. Moſt of the Mountains of Paleſtine were full of Caverns, whither the Inhabitants of the Villages generally retired for ſafety in time of War.

(k) Gave *Saul* Information, &c. It does not appear likely from the preceding Chapter that *Ahimelech* or the Prieſts knew any thing of *Saul*'s Diſpleaſure againſt *David*; and his determined Purpoſe to deſtroy him, and therefore as he was the King's Son-in-law, and *Ahimelech* thought he was ſent on ſome haſty Errand by the King, the giving him Bread and a Sword was what he owed in Duty to *Saul*, inſtead of its being an Act of Treaſon.

In

him the Cauſe, Wherefore he aſſiſted the Son of *Jeſſe* with Proviſion, and Advice, and thereby enabled him to proſecute his Deſign of ſupplanting him in his regal Authority?

Ahimelech, conſcious of his Innocence, alledged (*l*) the great Merit of *David*, both as related to the King and as a mighty Warrier in *Iſrael*, which were indiſpenſible Motives with him for Compliance with his Requeſt; and added, that he was wholly ignorant of the King's conceiving any Diſpleaſure againſt him at that Time.

Though the Plea of the High-Prieſt was ſo juſt and equitable, *Saul* determined to ſate his Revenge on the innocent Prieſt and his whole Brotherhood, and therefore ordered ſome of his Attendants to ſlay them, becauſe they had not given him Information of the Place to which *David* had fled.

The Guards, having heard *Ahimelech*'s Defence, declined the Execution of ſo barbarous a Commiſſion: *Doeg* therefore being preſent, undertook the bloody Office, and with a ſacrilegious Hand, ſlew no leſs than four-ſcore and five of the Prieſts of the Lord. Nor did this cruel Scene ſate the blood-thirſty *Saul*; for ſending a Party to *Nob*, he commanded them to put every living Soul, together with all the Cattle of the Field to the deſtructive Sword.

One of the Sons of *Ahimelech*, named *Abiathar* eſcaped this horrid Maſſacre, and flying to *David* related to him the dreadful Tidings, which though he deplored more bitterly, becauſe he looked on himſelf as the innocent Cauſe, afforded him not much ſurpriſe, as he had ſeen *Doeg* there, knew he was acquainted with all that had paſſed relative to him, and that he would inform the King, whoſe frantic Rage might lead him to the Commiſſion of the moſt enormous Actions. However he aſſured *Abiathar* of his Favour and Protection, that he ſhould ſhare his Fortune, and that he would hold his Intereſt equally dear with his own.

While *Saul* was cruelly employed in the Maſſacre of his guiltleſs Subjects, *David* was exerting himſelf in the juſt and neceſſary Defence of the Right of his Country; for having received Intelligence, that the *Philiſtines* had made a Deſcent upon *Keilah*, a City of *Judah*, and conſulted the divine Direction by the Prophet *Gad*, he marched to its Relief, and repulſed the Enemy with great Loſs of Men and Cattle.

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fortify himself in the City he had relieved, sent an Army to invest it. But *David*, who never entered any Enterprize without seeking that Wisdom which is from above, caused young *Abiathar* to lay the Cause before the Lord, who warned them of the Perfidy of the Inhabitants, and gave them to understand, that if they continued there, they would be delivered into the Hand of *Saul*.

David therefore, pursuant to the divine Direction, left that Place, and retired into a Wood in the Desert of *Ziph*, where he was preserved from the Vengeance of *Saul*, who could not learn the Place of his Retirement.

But his good Friend *Jonathan* having private Notice of his Situation, visited him, and encouraged him with an Assurance that the Lord would not suffer him to fall into the Hands of his enraged Father, seeing he had reserved him for the Government of *Israel*, and the Protection of his chosen People. Then renewing their Covenant of Friendship, they embraced, *Jonathan* returned Home, and *David* continued in the Wood.

The Inhabitants of the Place, near which *David* had retired, very officiously sent *Saul* Intelligence where he was, assuring him if he would send a sufficient Party to defend them, they would deliver *David* into his Hands. *Saul* acknowledged their proffered Service, but desired that they would most carefully explore his Haunts, as he knew him to be very subtle in all his Proceedings, and having done this, return and inform him of the Particulars. But *David* apprized of the base Design of the *Ziphites* shifted his Quarters, and retired farther into the Desert of *Moan*, whither he was so closely pursued by *Saul*, that nothing but a Valley separated the two Armies; *Saul* therefore relying on the superiority of his Number, determined to encompass the Mountain where *David* encamped, in order to take or slay his whole Party; however he was diverted from the Execution of this Plan, by the Arrival of a Messenger, who brought Word that the *Philistines* had invaded the Land, and that his Assistance was immediately required. Thus was *Saul* at this critical Juncture compelled to drop his private Resentment for the public Weal, and by diverting his Arms to repel the Invader, he afforded *David* an Opportunity of retiring into the strong Holds at *Engedi*.

Saul soon repulsed the *Philistines* and then renewed his pursuit of *David*, with three thousand chosen Men, amongst the most Mountainous and craggy Places of the Country. As *Saul* was on his March, he happened to turn into a Cave to ease Nature, little suspecting he was so near *David*, who with a few select Men had retired thither for Safety.

When *David*'s Men saw the King enter the Cave alone, thinking that Providence had ordained this Circumstance for their Rescue, they were for dispatching him immediately; but *David* was influenced by other Motives, and declared his Abhorrence of the very Attempt to execute their Proposal, saying, *God forbid that I should*

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ſtretch forth my Hand againſt the Lord's anointed.

However to convince *Saul*, that his Life had been in his Hand, he privately cut off the Skirt of his Robe.

This Action, though in itſelf inoffenſive, gave *David* much Concern on Reflection, becauſe he thought he had offered an Indignity to the Majeſty of his King. As ſoon as *Saul* left the Cave, *David* likewiſe came out, and calling to him at a Diſtance, reverently bowed before his Lord and King, ſhewed him the Skirt of his Robe and declared his Innocence in ſuch ſubmiſſive, yet generous Terms, as impreſſed the obdurate Heart of *Saul*, who burſting into tears, with the utmoſt Compunction, acknowledged his Guilt and *David*'s Juſtice. Then, as if convinced from the great Deliverance God had wrought for David, it was his Will he ſhould ſucceed to the Throne of *Iſrael*; he conjured him by the moſt ſacred Ties not to avenge on him or his Family the Wrongs he had done him, when he ſhould have it in his Power.

To obviate all Fear on the Part of *Saul*, *David* ſwore unto him, he would do according to his Deſire, upon which *Saul* returned Home; but *David* not judging it ſafe to rely on his ſpecious Behaviour, retired again with his People to their ſtrong Holds.

About this time died the Prophet *Samuel*, a Perſon in great Reputation among the *Hebrews*, for his Probity and Virtue; and the People gave an eminent Proof of the Eſteem they had for him, in the Magnificence and Expence of his Funeral.

They buried him at *Ramah*, in his own Country, and mourned for him afterward a long Time, not with the Ceremony of a formal publick Sorrow, but every individual had a diſtinct and a particular Share in the Loſs; for he was a Man of a natural benignity and Juſtice, and moſt remarkably in God's Favour for his Virtues.

After the death of *Eli*, he govern'd twelve Years alone; and then in the Reign of *Saul*, eighteen Years more.*

CHAP.

* Thus died the great Prophet *Samuel*, to whoſe Memory, the Author of the Eccleſiaſticus, has conſecrated this Eulogy: *Samuel* the Prophet of the Lord, beloved of his Lord, eſtabliſhed a Kingdom, and anointed Princes over his People. By the Law of the Lord he judged the Congregation, and the Lord had Reſpect unto *Jacob*. By his Faithfulneſs he was found a true Prophet, and by his Word he was known to be faithful in Viſion. He called upon the mighty Lord, when his Enemies preſſed upon him on every Side, when he offered the ſucking Lamb. And the Lord thundered from Heaven, and with a great Noiſe made his Voice to be heard. And he deſtroyed the Rulers of the *Syrians*, and all the Princes of the *Philiſtines*. Before his long Sleep he made Proteſtations in the Sight of the Lord and his anointed, and after his Death he propheſied, and ſhewed the King his End. *Eccle.* xlvi. Ver. 13. &c.

CHAP. III.

David's *extraordinary Adventure with* Nabal, *after whoſe Deceaſe he marries his Wife* Abigail. *Repeated Inſtance of Duty in* David *towards* Saul. David *repairs to* Gath. Saul *deſtroys the Witches, afterwards ſeeks to one.* Samuel *is raiſed and foretells the Ruin of* Saul. David *meets with a diſtreſsful Circumſtance. Overcomes his Enemies. Death of* Saul *and* Jonathan.

THERE lived at that Time near the Place where *David* frequented, a certain Man of the City of *Moan*, who was very wealthy in Herds and Poſſeſſions, who had in his Ground three thouſand Sheep, and a thouſand Goats.

David was ſo much his Friend, that he ſet his own People to aſſiſt in looking after his Flocks; forbidding them on their Peril, either for Hunger, or on any other Pretence whatever, to touch ſo much as one Hair of them; no, tho' they were abſolutely ſure of not being detected; continually inculcating to them the Duty and Obligation they lay under of living according to the Rules of Juſtice, and in Conformity to the Will of God, who was never pleaſed with any Man that coveted, or laid violent Hands on the Goods of his Neighbour.

By this Diſcipline, *David*, reſtrained thoſe about him from Violence, and kept them within Bounds; imagining all this while, that the Kindneſs he had ſhewn, and the good and generous Offices he had done, were conferr'd on a Perſon of Worth and Honeſty, who would be ſure to make him grateful Acknowledgments, and a ſuitable Return.

But *Nabal* (for that was the Man's Name) was a brutal, ill-natured Wretch; yet the Huſband of a notable, diſcreet, prudent and agreeable Woman. As he was one Day ſhearing his Sheep, *David* ſent ten of his People to *Nabal* with the Compliment of a thouſand good Wiſhes to him, and deſiring only ſome moderate Supply of Proviſions out of his Abundance; for his Shepherds could inform him, that all the while they had been together in the Deſart, they had been ſo far from doing him any Injury, that they had rather kept and preſerved his Sheep for him; cloſing the Diſcourſe with an Aſſurance, that what Friendſhip ſoever he ſhould do for *David* upon this Occaſion, ſhould be abundantly acknowledg'd.

The anſwer that *Nabal* returned them was rude and churliſh, like himſelf. David! ſays Nabal, *why who's that ſame* David. *I wonder?* They told him he was one of the Sons of *Jeſſe*. *Yes, yes,* ſays Nabel, *your runaway-ſervants look upon themſelves to be brave Fellows. I warrant ye.*

This contemptuous Affront enraged *David* to that Degree, that he immediately put himſelf at the Head of four hundred Men, leaving two hundred more behind with the Baggage (his Number being now encreaſ-

ed to six hundred) with a Vow and Determination, that very Night to cut off *Nabal*, with his House and Family.

Now *David*'s Indignation against him, was not so much for his Barbarity and Ingratitude, where he had been so Frankly obliged, but for the Virulence of so insolent an Outrage against a Man that never did him an Injury.

While Matters were in this Posture, one of *Nabal*'s Shepherds and Servants carry'd the Story of this Encounter to the Mistress: telling her, how *David* being distress'd for Provisions, and having sent to her Husband to desire some small Relief of him, who was not only refused by him, but answered with unsufferable and opprobrious Revilings; though *David* had ever dealt honourably and respectfully by him in guarding and securing his Flocks from Injuries and Violence; telling her further, what Apprehensions they had of the Mischief that the Sense of this Indignity might bring upon herself and her Husband.

So soon as *Abigail* (for that was her name) the Wife of *Nabal*, had heard their Story, she presently call'd for the Asses out; caused them to be laden with Presents, and, unknown to her Husband, (who was at that time Fuddled, and Senseless) she put herself upon the Way to find out *David*, whom she met coming down the Straits of the Mountain, and four hundred Men following him, with an Intent to take Vengeance upon *Nabal*.

Abigail, no sooner saw him approach, but leaping from her Ass, she threw herself prostrate upon the Ground, and *humbly besought David to pass over the Words of her Husband, as one whose Name was suited to his Nature:* Nabal in Hebrew signifying a Fool and a Madman. *She pleaded for herself, that she saw none of the Messengers, that were sent to her Husband; begged Pardon, and desir'd* David *to give God thanks for sending her as the Instrument to keep his Hands from Blood: and Sir, says she, may you still preserve yourself clear of that Polution, that God may turn the Vengeance that threatens* Nabal *upon the Heads of your Enemies. Be pleased, I beseech you, to accept of the Good-will of your poor Servant, with these small Presents and upon my humble Request, to pass over the Offence of my Husband, who has so justly incurr'd your Displeasure; for there is nothing so becoming the Character of the Person, that Providence designs for a Crown, as Clemency and Compassion.* David was pleased to receive the Present telling her, *That she had Reason to bless God that put it into her Heart to meet him; otherwise* says he, *you should never have liv'd to have seen another Day; for I had sworn to myself to lay your House in Ruins this very Night, and not to leave one Soul alive in the Family of that ungrateful Man, who had cast so many Indignities upon me, and those that belong to me.*

You are now come in a blessed Hour to ally my Rage, and put a Stop to my Resolution; but yet after all, though I am content for your Sake, to forgive Nabal's *Fault against me, there is a*

Judg-

Engraved for the History of the BIBLE.

ABIGAIL bringeth Presents to DAVID.

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Judgment ſtill behind that attends him; and his ill-manners will be his Ruin ſome other Way.

With theſe Words, *David* diſcharged *Abigail*, who went directly Home, and found her Husband carouſing among his Companions, and ſo ſottiſhly Drunk with Wine, that there was no ſpeaking to him that Night; but the next Morning, when he became ſober, ſhe told him the whole Story from Beginning to End; which ſtruck him with ſuch an Aſtoniſhment, that he was ſeized with a dead Palſy upon it, and died in ten Days.

David upon the News of his Death, was heard to ſay, that the Judgment was righteous, and that God had avenged his Cauſe, while he that receiv'd the Injury, came off with clean Hands. *(a)*

After the Deceaſe of the Husband, *David* ſent a Meſſage, and an Invitation to *Abigail*, deſiring her to come over to him; for he would take her for his lawful Wife. Her Anſwer was, that ſhe was not worthy ſo much as to waſh the Feet of *David*; but ſhe went to him: however, with all her Equipage, and became his Wife; an Honour that ſhe was indebted to for the Graces both of her Mind and Perſon; for it was her Prudence, Modeſty, and Beauty, that recommended her to this Preferment.

David had alſo a former Wife, [*Ahinoam*] but as for his late Wife *Michal*, the Daughter of *Saul*, her Father gave her away to *Phalti*, the Son of *Laiſh* of *Gethla*.

It was not long after this, when the men of *Zipe* brought a freſh Account to *Saul*, that David was come into their Quarters again, and that with a little Help he might be eaſily taken. Upon this Intelligence, *Saul* immediately marched thither with three thouſand Men; and the Night coming on, he pitched his Tents at a Place called *Hachilah*.

When *David*, came to underſtand that *Saul* was moving that Way, he ſent out Scouts for a particular Information where the Enemy lay; and Word being brought that they had poſted themſelves near a Place, call'd *Hachilah*, *David*, got up in the Night, and with only *Abiſhai*, the Son of his Siſter *Zeruiah*, and *Ahimelech* the Hittite, went directly, without the Privity of any other Perſon, into the Camp of the Enemy; where they found the King in his Tent, with his General *Abner*, and his Guards about him, all faſt aſleep.

Abiſhai, ſeeing the King in his Bed, and his Lance by him, would needs have nailed him immediately to the Ground; but *David* held his Hands, and *(b)* ſaid, Abiſhai, Saul *is God's King, and his Perſon ſacred, let*

(a) The World may gather from this example, that there's no avoiding the Stroke of Divine Juſtice; and that it is Providence that governs the World, not Paſſion or Chance; but that both good and wicked Men are either rewarded or puniſhed in their own Kind.

(b) Abiſhai, ſays. When we conſider the juſt

the Man be never ſo wicked; he is only accountable for the ill Management of his Power to him who gave him the Power itſelf.

But for a Proof, however, that I have him at Mercy, though I will not make a bad Uſe of the Advantage, I will now take away his Lance, and Pitcher of Water from his Bed-ſide.

David leaving the Camp as ſilently and unperceived as he came into it, and betwixt the Darkneſs of the Night, and the Strength of his own Reſolution, without any Apprehenſion of Danger, paſſed the River; and then getting up to the Top of a Mountain, within hearing of the Camp, he called out from thence to *Abner* and the Guards, to wake them. *Abner* ſtarted upon this Clamour, and hearing himſelf called by Name, cry'd with a loud Voice, to know who it was that would ſpeak with him? Anſwer was made, it was *David*, the Son of *Jeſſe*, one of your Fugitives. *Are you a fit Man*, reply'd *David, to be a Prince's Favourite; a General of his Army, and to take upon you the Guard of his Royal Perſon, and under all theſe honourable Obligations, to lay ſleeping at your Eaſe, when your Maſter's Life is in Danger? Can you tell me what is become of the King's Lance, and the Pitcher of Water that were this Night taken by the Enemy out of his Tent; and even from his very Bed's Side? and you, and your Guards, faſt aſleep, without knowing any thing of the Matter? Now whether this were Neglect or Treachery, it is equally the ſame, you certainly deſerve to loſe your Head for it.*

When *Saul* found it was *David*'s Voice, and himſelf now a ſecond Time betray'd, into the Hands of a very Perſon, whoſe Life he himſelf was ſeeking, miſtaking the beſt Friend he had, for the moſt mortal of his Enemies; *Saul*, I ſay, was ſo ſenſible of *David*'s Goodneſs, under the greateſt of Provocations, that *he gave him public Thanks for his Life; bidding him not to fear for the Time to come, but to return to his Habitation; for he found by Experience, that his Life was not dearer to himſelf than it was to* David; *whom now he ſhould look upon as his Preſerver, and a Perſon of ſo tryed and unchangable Affection to him, that notwithſtanding all Baniſhments, Hazards, ill Uſage, Loſs of Friends, and many Attempts upon his Life, he returned him nothing but Benefits for Injuries.*

David, deſired him to ſend for the Lance and the Pitcher, appealing to the righteous God, to judge between them, and to bear him Witneſs, that when he took away *Saul*'s Lance and Pitcher, he could with as much Eaſe have taken away his Life.

After this Deliverance, *Saul* re-

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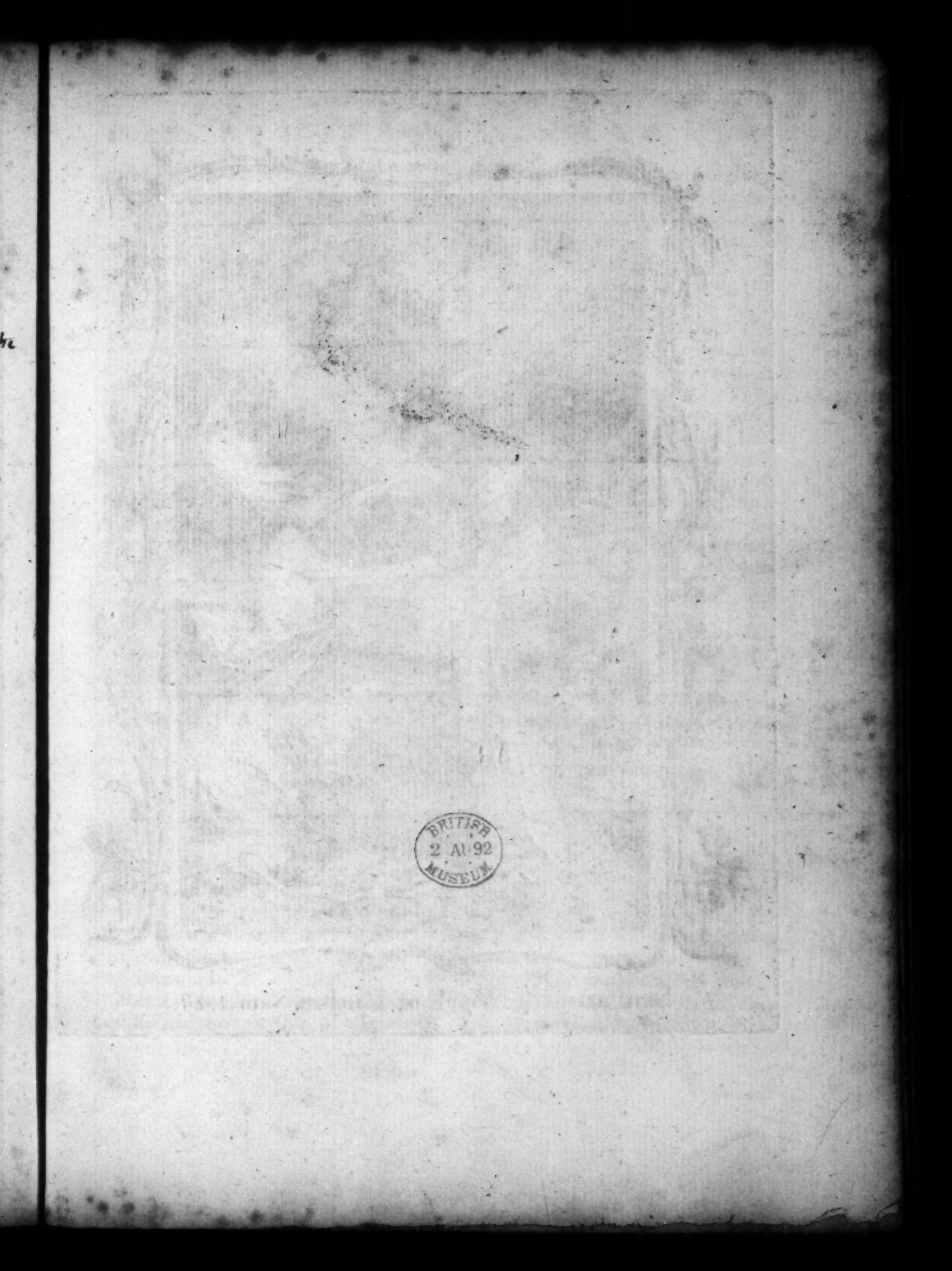
juſt Foundations of *David*'s Reſentment againſt *Saul*, and the Arguments and Inſtigations of *Abiſhai*, we cannot help thinking, that God put theſe Opportunities in the Power of *David*, on Purpoſe to make a Trial of his Virtue and Clemency: nor can we, at this Time, fail to admire the glorious Conqueſt which he made over theſe Paſſions, when to too many others would probably have proved irreſiſtable.

turned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Saul and the Witch of Endor. Sam. 1. 28.

turned safe to his Palace. But *David* not chusing to venture himself any longer in a Place where he thought himself still in Danger of being taken, removed with his six hundred Men into the Land of the *Philistines*, to dwell there, with the Consent of his People.

Being now come to *Achish*, the King of *Gath*, one of the five principal Cities belonging to the *Philistines*, the King entertained *David*, and his two Wives, *Ahinoam* and *Abigail*.

Saul all this while had Notice of *David*'s Motions; but after two Disappointments already, and falling into the very Snare himself that he had set for *David*, he left his Adversary to take his Fortune, and, desisted from the Pursuit.

David found himself uneasy in the City of *Gath*, and so took the Freedom to desire of the King this Addition to his former Bounties; that he would be pleased to assign him some Place or Portion of Ground in his Dominions, for himself and those that belonged to him, to live upon; for it gave him some Uneasiness, to continue still in a Place where he must appear burdensome to the People. So the King gave him *Ziklag* to himself and his Heirs for ever; and *David* retained so great a Kindness for the Place, even after he came to be King, as to reserve it for a private Possession for himself and Posterity ever afterwards.

David's Stay in *Ziklag* was four Months and twenty Days, whence he made several Inroads upon their Neighbours, the *Gesshurites*, the *Gezerites* and *Amalekites*, carrying away vast Booties of Mules and Camels; but taking no Prisoners, for Fear they should discover the whole Mystery to *Achish*. He made the King Presents, however, out of the Spoil, who would ask him now and then, where he met with all that Pillage. His Answer was, that he had made Incursions into the southerly Parts of Judea, and there he found it. There was no great Difficulty to make *Achish* believe a Story that his Heart was so desirous to have true; for it was reasonable to think, that after all this Havock and Outrage committed by *David* upon his Countrymen, he would never dare to look Homeward again; and by that Means have nothing left to trust to, but the Service of King *Achish*.

The *Philistines* were about this Time preparing for a War against the *Israelites*, and a general Rendezvous appointed upon such a Day, in *Shunem*, where *Achish* was to draw them into a Body, and thence to lead them out against the Enemy. The King spoke to *David* also to join him, with his six hundred Men over and above his own Troops; who not only promised it with great Readiness, but told *Achish* further, that the Time was now at Hand, that would put it into his Power to make him an honourable return for all his Bounties.

The King, on the other Hand, passing his royal Word to *David*, the more to oblige him, that if he succeeded in this Battle, he would invest him with great Honours, and in par-

ticular give him the Command of his Guards.

It is to be obſerved, that *Saul* had baniſhed all Diviners, Sooth-ſayers, Fortune-tellers, and all other People whatſoever, of ſuch vain Pretenſions, out of his Dominions; but the Prophets he ſtill retained.

News being brought to *Saul*, that the *Philiſtines* were advanced as far as *Shunem*, and encamped upon the Plain there, he went out to meet them, and drew up near the Mountain of *Giboah*, directly oppoſite the Camp of the Enemy.

The Armies being now in Sight of each other, *Saul* found the *Philiſtines* ſo much ſuperior to the *Iſraelites*, that his Heart miſgave him; and this Terror put him upon conſulting the Prophets about the Event of this Battle. The Queſtion being put, but no Anſwer returned, the Silence of the Oracle was worſe to *Saul* than all the reſt; for he looked upon it as a foreboding Preſage of an evil Fate at hand, that he fell into a downright Deſpondency upon it; and yet, ſuch was the Hardneſs of his Heart, that tho' God had withdrawn his Favour from him in ſuch a ſignal Manner, and he himſelf conſcious of it, he had ſtill Recourſe, after all this, to Conjurors and Wizzards, to learn the Event of Things, and ſet People at Work to find him out ſome cunning Woman, who could foretel Things to come; for there were a Sort of People that took upon them to call upon the Ghoſts of the Dead, and thereby to reſolve ſuch Queſtions about future Contingences as the Queriſts ſhould pleaſe to aſk them.

While he was upon this Enquiry, one of his Family informed him, that he had heard of ſuch a Woman at *Endor*. Upon this Information, *Saul* diſguiſed himſelf, and taking two Confidents along with him, went directly to the woman of *Endor*, without acquainting any other Perſon.

The firſt Thing he aſked of her was, as a Trial of her Skill, in calling up the Ghoſt of ſuch a Perſon as he ſhould name. The Woman excuſed herſelf, out of a Reverence to the King's Edict, which had forbidden this way of Divination, upon Pain of Baniſhment; wherefore ſhe beſought him not to betray her into a Snare, for if ſhe ſhould pretend to give a Reſolution, and be detected, the Practice would infallibly be her Ruin.

But this Refuſal would not ſatisfy *Saul*, who preſſing her ſtill more and more, with bitter Imprecations upon himſelf, that no Mortal ſhould ever know of one Syllable that paſſed between them, either Queſtion or Anſwer; ſhe was prevailed upon at laſt to venture herſelf upon the Credit of ſuch Aſſurances, that ſhe was ſafe in his Hands.

Immediately upon her conſenting to his Requeſt, *Saul* bad her call up the Ghoſt of *Samuel*. And upon her calling him up, the Ghoſt appear'd. The Woman was under an Aſtoniſhment at the Sight of ſo divine a Figure, and turning toward *Saul*, aſked him, *If he were not* Saul *the King*. *Saul* made Anſwer, *That he was the Man; and obſerving her to be trembling*

him, and in Disorder, desired to know what might be the Cause of that Confusion. She answered, *She saw the Resemblance of an antient Man, with a radiant Glory about him, ascending from the Earth.* *Saul* demanded of her what kind of Figure, of what Years, and in what Habit he seem'd to be? she said, *A man in Years, of a venerable Aspect, and in a sacerdotal Vest.* By this Description *Saul* concluded it to be the Figure of *Samuel*, and fell down upon his Face and worshipped. *The Spectre demanded what he gave him this Trouble for, to take him from his Place of Rest? Saul* replied, *That it was absolute Necessity; for he was threaten'd with a mighty Army, and wanted Advice what to do; for God had forsaken him, and he had neither Prophets, Dreams, nor Visions to fly to for Direction. For these Reasons, he had now Recourse as he said, to Samuel, as his last Refuge, and a Person that he had ever found favourable to himself and his Affairs.* *Samuel* foreseeing that *Saul* had but one Day more to live, told him, *How vain a Thing it was for him who knew himself forsaken of God, to launch out into unseasonable Curiosities, about what should hereafter become of him. But,* says the Ghost, *since nothing else will serve your Turn, I am to tell you, That the Almighty God has determined that* David *shall be put into Possession of the Government, and bring the present War to a happy Conclusion, while you yourself are to lose your Crown, and your Life together, for your Disobedience to God in the Business of the* Amalekites, *and for the Contempt of his Commands, which from my Lips you received by his Order, while I was living.*

Know further, that you are to be with me To-morrow; your Army shall be overthrown, and yourself and your Sons fall in the Battle.

These awful Words struck *Saul* speechless, and fainting, he fell to the Ground; whether this proceeded from so dreadful a Sentence, or from Weakness of Body, may be a Question, tho' most probably the latter for he had eat nothing for twenty-four Hours. But at last, coming a little to himself, the Woman very earnestly pressed him to take some Refreshment to support Nature; desiring no other Consideration for the dangerous Office she had performed him, than to put him in a Condition of Strength and Ability to return to his Army.

She was throughly sensible of the Hazard she had run in the Exercise of a forbidden Profession; and especially in the Violation of a Decree at the Desire (tho' inadvertently) of him that made it.

After a great many Importunities, in the Depth of his Despondance, *Saul* was prevailed on, to take some Nourishment. Accordingly, the Woman, tho' poor, killed her only Calf, dressed it, and set it before *Saul* and his Servants, with her whole Fortune in that Treat; who, took his Repast, and returned that Night to the Army.*

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* I must not pass over the Candour, the Good-nature, and the Greatness of the Woman's

The *Philiſtine* having drawn their Troops together from all Quarters, according to their Diſtribution into Tribes, Kingdoms, and Governments, *Achiſh*, the King of *Gath*, with his Men after the reſt, and *David* with his Band of ſix hundred after *Achiſh*; ſeveral of the *Philiſtine* Commanders taking Notice of a Mixture of *Iſraelites* among them, enquir'd from whence they came; who ſent for them? and what they did there? *Achiſh* made anſwer, *That the young Man,* (*pointing to* David) *was a Servant of* Saul's, *who was fallen under his Diſpleaſure, and forced to fly for his Life.*

He came to me, ſays Achiſh, *with the People he has about him, for Sanctuary; ſo I received him, and provided for him; and now upon this Occaſion he has promiſed me his utmoſt Aſſiſtance againſt* Saul, *in requital for his Protection, and to gratify his Revenge.*

The *Philiſtines* were one and all againſt truſting a profeſs'd Enemy, and were rather for ſending him back, for they did not know, they ſaid, what Miſchief the Treachery of ſuch a Party might do upon ſuch an Occaſion. And for the Difference betwixt him and his Maſter, the Service he might do him upon this Opportunity, would compound for forty ſuch Breaches; wherefore *Achiſh* ſhould do well, they ſaid, to conſider what he was doing, and without more Words to ſend him back to the Habitation he had aſſign'd him; for this was the *David*, they ſaid, that the Virgins cried up ſo in their Songs, for killing ſo many thouſands of the *Philiſtines*. *Achiſh* could not oppoſe the Force and Reaſon of the Objection; and therefore he thought fit to take *David* aſide, and converſe with him upon that Subject, ſaying.

Young Man, upon the certain Proof and Experience that I have received of your Fidelity and Courage, I have now entertained you as my Ally and Aſſociate in this Expedition, wherefore withdraw yourſelf immediately to the Place I have alloted you, and have a particular Care there of the Peace of my People, and the Country near you, for Fear my Enemies ſhould take Advantage of my Abſence, and preſs me with Troubles at Home.

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man's Mind, without ſome Note of Admiration. The King had forbidden her the Practice of an Art that was the only Maintenance of herſelf and Family

Here comes a Gueſt and a Stranger to her, that ſhe had never ſeen before; but a Perſon in Miſery, and one that had need of her Advice in the Way that he himſelf had forbidden; for it proved to be the King. She received him, treated him, and relieved him; and all this ſhe did willingly and chearfully; nay, and ſo frankly too, that ſhe gave him all ſhe had, and without any Proſpect or Contemplation of a Reward, by gaining the King's Favour; for ſhe knew, he was doomed to die; beſide that over and above the Piety of theſe Offices, ſhe did all this for the very Man whoſe Prohibition had been the Ruin of her. This Proceeding was quite contrary to the Cuſtom of the World, that makes Charity an Intereſt, and gives or relieves only to get by the Bargain, putting out Virtue, as they do Money, to Intereſt. We may reckon that we have recommended to us in the great Example of this generous Woman the Honour and Humanity of doing good Offices to all People in Neceſſity; beſide that a ſincere and unaffected Charity, is a Virtue of all others the moſt acceptable in God's Sight.

You

You will do me the Office of a kind Ally, every Jot as effectually in that Government, as if you were my Second in the Army; and in the mean Time, I am as much your Friend as ever.

Upon this Declaration of *Achiſh*, they parted, and *David*, according to his Order, went his Way to *Ziklag*.

But while *David* was following the Camp of the *Philiſtines*, the *Amalekits* fell upon *Ziklag*, took it, and laid it in Aſhes; making dreadful Havock in the Country thereabouts: they pillag'd all wherever they came, and at laſt went Home again with what Booty they could carry along with them.

David, at his return, finding the Place of his Habitation deſtroy'd and deſolate, his own Wives, and the Wives and Children of his Fellow-ſoldiers hurried away Priſoners, with all that belong'd unto them, he broke out into ſo paſſionate an Extravagance of Lamentation and Outrage, that he rent his Cloaths, and wept himſelf dry, even for Want of Matter to ſupply more Tears. His Followers were ready to ſtone him too, for the Loſs of their Wives and Children; for, they ſaid; he was the cauſe of all, and the whole Miſcarriage was laid at his Door.

When *David* had wearied himſelf with Weeping, he came to the Reſolution of applying to Heaven for Comfort; and deſired *Abiathar* the High-prieſt to put on his pontifical Robes, and conſult God in Form and then Report of the Oracle. The Queſtion was, whether or not, in Caſe of overtaking the *Amalekites* upon the Purſuit, the *Iſraelites* might be allowed to receive their Wives and Children again, that had been taken from them before, and revenge themſelves upon the Enemy.

The High-prieſt bad *David* follow them, and proſper. Upon which Encouragement he took his ſix hundred Men, and purſued them to the Brook *Beſor*; where they found an *Egyptian* that had loſt his Way, and was ready to periſh with Hunger, having been three Days in the Deſart without eating. They took pity upon him, and after giving him a little Refreſhment, they aſk'd him who he was? and to whom he belong'd? He told them he was an *Egyptian* born, and a Servant to a Perſon who was at the Sacking and Burning of *Ziklag*, and the Country thereabouts; who left him upon the Way in his Paſſage Home again, becauſe he was ſo faint, that he could not keep up with the Troops.

David made Uſe of this *Egyptian* for his Guide, upon the Trace of the *Amalekites*, whom, at laſt, he overtook, and found ſome feaſting, and ſome with much Pride and Vanity, in the Contemplation of their late Booty. In ſhort, while they were drowned in Drink and Sleep, and wholly ſet upon their Eaſe and Pleaſure, and unarmed, *David* fell upon them in this Diſorder and Confuſion, mingling their Blood with their Wine, ſo that there eſcaped, out of their whole Number, not above four hundred Perſons, who were carried off by the Swiftneſs of their

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This Deciſion paſſed into a Law, that is to ſay, The Spoil to be equally divided between them that guarded the Baggage, and thoſe that ſhould fight the Battle.

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No sooner had the *Israelites* of the Valley beyond *Jordan*, and the Cities of the Plains, Intelligence of the Death of *Saul*, and his Sons, and of the entire Destruction of his Army, but they withdrew themselves out of their open Towns into more secure and strong Holds; while the *Philistines* took Possession, and without any Difficulty made themselves Masters of the Places the others had quitted.

On the next Day after the Battle, the *Philistines* coming into the Field to view the Dead, found the Bodies of *Saul*, and his Sons, among the rest. They stripp'd them, cut off their Heads, and sent Expresses every Way up and down with the News of this Defeat.

Their Arms they deposited in the Temple of *Ashtaroth*, and their Bodies they exposed upon Gibbets, under the Walls of the City of *Bethshan*, known at this Day by the Name of *Scythopolis*.

This barbarous Outrage upon the Bodies of *Saul* and his Sons, coming to the Ears of the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, raised in them such an Indignation at the Inhumanity of refusing them the last Rites of Burial, that some of the most daring and enterprizing among them, made up a Party, and travelling all Night, took down the Bodies of *Saul* and his Sons from the Walls of *Bethshan*, and carried them away to *Jabesh*; not a Creature daring to open his Mouth against them.

Their Deaths were lamented by the whole People of the Place, who gave their Bodies a publick and an honourable Interment in the chief Part of their Province. They spent seven Days in so strict a Solemnity of Fasting and Mourning, that Men, Women, and Children, were all bound indispensibly to observe it.

This was the End of *Saul*, according to the Prediction of *Samuel*, for his not prosecuting the War against the *Amalekites*, according to his Order, and for the Massacre of *Ahimelech*, and his Family, with the Devastation even of the sacerdotal City itself.

He ruled in the Days of *Samuel*, eighteen Years, and twenty two more after his Decease, coming to this unhappy End in the same Manner as it is here set forth.

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CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

David *avenges the Death of* Saul *on the* Amalekite. *His Elegy on the Death of* Saul *and* Jonathan. *Is proclaimed King of* Judah. David's *Succeſs againſt the King of the other Tribes.* Abner *revolts to* David. *Is ſlain by* Joab. David *revenges the Death of* Abner. *The Tribes unite under* David, *who rules with Prudence and Piety, and is crowned with a Series of Succeſs.*

SOON after *David*'s Arrival at *Ziklag*, from the Conqueſts of the *Amalekites*, he received the News of the Death of *Saul*, from the very Man who had ſlain him in Battle.

When he approached *David* with every Token of Grief and Humility, and was enquiring concerning the Cauſe of his arrival, as well as his Perſon, he thus related the fatal Caſe. *I am an* Amalekite, *and come from the late Engagement of the* Iſraelites, *in which fell King* Saul, *and three of his Sons together, with many thouſands of his inferior Ranks. I ſhall ſpeak no more than what I ſaw; it was my Fortune to be near the King, when he was in his Extremity. He caſt himſelf upon the Point of his own Sword; but being faint with his Wounds, he could not execute what he had begun; ſo that upon his earneſt Deſire, I was forced to do the Office for him, to keep him from falling alive into the Hands of his Enemies.*

He ſhewed *David* at the ſame Time the Bracelet, and the Crown that he took from the dead Body, (to confirm the Truth of his Story) which he reſerved for a Preſent to *David*.

Upon this melancholy News, he rent his Clothes, and ſpent the whole Day with his Friends in Tears and Lamentations. But the moſt ſenſible Part of his Affliction was, the Loſs of *Jonathan*, his ever dear and faithful Friend, and more than once the very Preſerver of his Life.

So tranſcendant was the Virtue of *David*, and his Generoſity toward *Saul*, that notwithſtanding ſo many repeated Practices upon his Life, he did not only deplore his Misfortune, but ordered the Criminal to be delivered up to *(d)* Juſtice; not only upon his own Confeſſion, but the more certain Evidence of his Guilt, in the Crown and the Bracelet, that he took from *Saul*, after he was dead; and proving himſelf to be truly an *Amalekite*, owning the very Principle of a Regicide.

David, upon the melancholy Occaſion, compoſed ſeveral Elegies, one

(*d*) Juſtice. *David* herein acted at leaſt the Part of a good Politician, if not of a righteous Judge; for being ſhortly to aſcend the throne himſelf, it was neceſſary to eſtabliſh this Maxim, that to ſlay the Lord's anointed, upon any Accoun whatever, was a moſt execrable Crime, and to clear himſelf from the Imputation of being any Way concerned in, or acceſſary to ſo foul a Fact (which his Enemies might have been apt to imagine, had he given any Countenance or Protection to this Man) he ordered him immediately to be put to Death.

of which cited by the ſacred Hiſtorian, is juſtly deemed an eminent Specimen of Piety and Rhetoric.

When *David* had paid his laſt Duties to the Memory of *Saul*, and his Sons, and the Term of the Mourning was expired, he conſulted God by the Prophet, which of the Cities of *Judah* ſhould be allotted him for his Habitation: and it was anſwered *Hebron*. Wherefore he left *Ziklag* immediately, and repaired thither, with his two Wives, and the Guards of his Perſon that he had about him; whither the whole Trihe came ſoon after, and a full Convention with one Voice proclaimed him King.

David had heard by this Time of the generous and reſpectful Behaviour of the Men of *Jabeſh* toward *Saul* and his Sons, and how bravely they reſcued their Bodies from Infamy, in the Face of the Enemy, and gave them an honourable Burial. So that he ſent them particular Acknowledgments, in his own Name, for what they had done in Honour of thoſe Princes, as an Obligation that ſhould for ever be remembered to their Advantage. The ſame Meſſenger giving them to underſtand, that the Tribe of *Judah* had declared *David*, their King.

In this Juncture, *Abner*, the Son of *Ner*, and *Saul*'s general, a Man of great Courage and Reſolution, having heard of the Death of *Saul*, *Jonathan*, and two other of his Sons, in the late Battle, poſted to the Camp, to look after *Iſhboſheth*, at that Time the only Survivor of *Saul*'s Male Iſſue.

When he found him, to ſecure him from Danger, croſſed the River *Jordan* with him, and got him declared King of all *Iſrael*, the Tribe of *Judah* excepted, appointing *Manahaiem* for his Reſidence, as much as the Camp.

Abner was ſo incenſed againſt the Tribe of *Judah*, for the Choice of their King, that he reſolved to make War upon them for it, and detached a Body of choſen Men for the Encounter.

Joab, the Son of *Zeruiah*, had the Command of *David*'s Army, taking his two Brothers, *Abiſhai* and *Abazel* along with him. When they were advanced to a certain Fountain of *Gibeon*, the two Armies being in Sight of each other, drew up; but as they ſtood in Order, and ready to engage, *Abner* propoſed a trial before-hand between an equal Number of each Side, to ſee which were the braver Men of the two. So that by Conſent, they ſent out twelve and twelve to diſpute the Point, and in Sight of the two Armies.

They began the Combat with their Darts, and then fell in with their Swords, every Man taking his Adverſary by the Hair, and ſtabbing one another, till they all fell dead upon the Spot. The Armies joined them, and for ſome Time fought furiouſly on both Sides; but in the End, *Abner* was totally routed. *Joab*, and his two Brothers, cloſely purſuing them, encouraged their Men, both to the Chace and Execution. But no Man ſtuck ſo cloſe to him as *Abazel*, who was ſwifter of Foot than moſt

Horſes, and having ſingled him out, preſſed cloſe after him, without turning either to the right Hand, or to the left.

When *Abner* found himſelf ſo reſolutely purſued, he offered him a Suit of Arms to deſiſt; but ſeeing he could not prevail, he fairly adviſed him not to put him to the Neceſſity of doing him a Miſchief, for the ſaving of his own Life: after which he could never think of looking his Brother in the Face.

Abner perceiving by this Time, that *Ahazel* was not to be wrought upon, turned his Lance in his Flight, and ſtruck his Purſuer dead upon the Spot. This Accident retarded the Purſuit; for the People gave over the Chace to ſtand gazing at the ſlain *Ahazel*. But *Joab* and his Brother *Abiſhai* were now paſt the dead Body, and ſo exaſperated againſt *Abner* for the Death of their Brother, that with incredible Speed and Vigour they followed the Purſuit till towards Sunſet.

Upon the Hill of *Ammah*, *Abner*, with the Tribe of *Benjamin*, took the Advantage of a riſing Ground to obſerve the Enemy, and from thence to reaſon the Caſe with *Joab*, repreſenting to him, *That this outragious Animoſity was already gone too far among the People of the ſame Blood and Profeſſion; and that he had intreated* Ahazel *to deſiſt from the Purſuit; but he being obſtinately reſolute, ſtill continued, and thereby forced him for Self-preſervation, to ſlay him at his Feet.*

Joab could not oppoſe the Reaſonableneſs of *Abner*'s Plea, and therefore cauſed a Retreat to be ſounded and encamped upon the ſame Place, that Night. But *Abner* continued his March over the River *Jordan*, to the Palace of *Iſhboſheth*, the Son of *Saul*. The Day following he took a View of the Dead (which he cauſed to be buried), computing that *Abner* loſt three hundred and ſixty Men, and *David* nineteen; without reckoning *Ahazel*, whoſe Body was carried by *Joab* and *Abiſhai*, to *Bethlehem*, and there laid in the Sepulchre of their Fathers; from whence they returned to King *David* at *Hebron*.

This Diſpute between the Adherence of *David*, and thoſe of *Saul*, was the Cauſe of a ſeditious and bloody War amongſt the *Iſraelites*. But *David*'s Army waxed gradually ſtronger than that of *Saul*, and gained many Advantages over their Opponents.

David, in the mean Time had ſix Sons, by as many Wives, *Ammon*, the ſon of *Ahinonam*; *Daniel*, the Son of *Abagai*; *Abſolam*, the Son of *Meacah*, *Adonijah*, the Son of *Haggith Shephotiah*, the Son of *Abithal*; and *Ithrea*, the Son of *Egla*.

In the Proſecution of this Civil War, it was the Prudence, the Intereſt, and the Popularity of *Abner*, that ſupported the Pretentions of *Saul*'s Family, and kept the People in their Obedience to *Iſhboſheth*. But this Prince being informed that *Aſhner* lived in a ſcandalous Familiarity with *Rizpah*, one of his Father's late Concubines, reprimanded him ſo ſeverely for it, that it highly incenſed him, as he had ever been a zealous

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Adherent to the Cauſe and Intereſt of King *Saul*, and his Family.

Upon this Provocation *Abner* meditated Revenge, determining to tranſfer the Crown from *Iſhboſheth* to *David*, and thereby make it generally known, that *Iſhboſheth* was not advanced to the Government for any Virtue or Ability of his own, but wholly by the Advice, Arms, Intereſt, Recommendation, and try'd Fidelity of himſelf.

He ſent a Commiſſion to *Hebron*, with full Power to make a League with *David* in his Name, upon this Condition, that from and after the Time of *Abner*'s drawing off all the Tribes from *Iſhboſheth* to *David* and advancing him to the Throne by the univerſal Conſent of the People, *Abner* ſhould be received as *David*'s firſt Miniſter and Favourite.

Nothing could have been more Welcome to *David* than this Propoſal, and it was accordingly accepted. The firſt Thing he deſired, as the Earneſt of a future Alliance, was the reſtoring *Michal*, whom he had purchaſed with very great Labour and Hazard, in obtaining the Heads of ſix hundred *Philiſtines*, a Bargain for her of *Saul*.

Abner therefore took *Michal* out of the Arms of *Phalti*, upon whom ſhe was beſtowed, and then called the Principals of the People, both Military and Civil, together, and addreſſed them to this Purpoſe.

There was a Time, when you would have gone over from Iſhboſheth *to* David, *and I was againſt it; but you are now at Liberty to do what you pleaſe; for the Prophet* Samuel *hath moſt infallibly aſſured us, from the Voice of God himſelf, that* David *is the Man, whom divine Providence hath deſigned as King and Governor of the whole Nation of the* Iſraelites; *and that it is he, and only he, that is to avenge us upon the* Philiſtines, *and to bring them under our Yoke.*

Theſe Words were ſo clear a Diſcovery of *Abner*'s Deſign, that the Heads of the People, and of the Army, fell in unanimouſly with his Opinion; and from that Time forward declared and acted openly in Favour of *David*. When they had proceeded thus far, *Abner* called for the *Benjamites*, on whom alone the Protection of *Iſhboſheth* depended, and delivered himſelf to them in the ſame Manner, and with the ſame Effect as he had done the other Tribes, for they all declared themſelves as one Man for *David*.

When *Abner* had thus advanced toward the Performance of his Conditions, he took about twenty choſen Men with him to *David*, in order, partly to ratify the Treaty, and partly for common Satisfaction, as People rather prefer being preſent at Treaties in which they are concerned, than having them tranſacted by Proxy, that the Proceedings on both Sides might be the more impartially tranſmitted from the one to the other, and an exact Report made of what paſſed between himſelf and the Heads of the Tribes, and how he had now brought over the *Benjamites* to *David*'s Party.

Abner and his Company were treated

ed by *David* with Freedom and Magnificence, for the Time they ſtaid; but after ſome few Days, he deſired, for the preſent, to be diſmiſſed, that he might conduct the Army and the People to him; and upon delivering up the Government into his Hands, by the Conſent of the whole Nation, fulfil his Deſign.

Abner was preſently diſpatched according to his Deſire, and hardly got out of one of the Gates of *Hebron*, before *Joab David*'s General, who had been ſomewhere abroad, came in at another; being given to underſtand that *Abner* had been in private with *David*, upon certain Propoſals to ſettle him in the Government, the Conditions offered and accepted, and that a League had been ſolemnly ratified betwixt them; ſtrong Prepoſſeſſion entered into *Joab*'s Head, that this Intrigue of *Abner*'s would be his Ruin, and ſupplant him not only in his Maſter's Favour, but in the moſt honourable of his Commiſſions; eſpecially, conſidering that *Abner* was a Man of Policy and Addreſs, and one who well knew how to improve a critical Juncture to his own Advantage.

To vent his Spleen againſt *Abner*, *Joab* endeavoured to perſwade the King, by artful Inſinuations, that he ſhould do well to beware how he truſted *Abner*; for his main Intent was to eſtabliſh the Family of *Saul* in the Government.

When *Joab* found that he could not work upon *David*, by Calumny and Slander, to the Prejudice of *Abner*, he bethought himſelf of a ſurer and ſhorter way, therefore to ſate his Revenge, which was by taking away his Life; he diſpatched Meſſengers after him in *David*'s Name, to call him back again with all imaginable Expedition, under a Pretext of ſomewhat forgotten in his Inſtructions that was very conſiderable.

The Meſſengers overtook him upon the Way at a Place called *Sirah*, about three Miles from *Hebron*; and upon their delivering their Meſſage, *Abner* very innocently went back with them to the City, little thinking of the malicious Intention of taking away his Life. Upon his coming up to the Walls of the Town, *Joab* ſtood in the Gate with a ſpecious Appearance of Kindneſs and Humanity, ready to receive him; and taking him aſide, as upon private Buſineſs, ſurprized him, and plunged his Sword into his Bowels.

Thus was this brave Man taken off by the perfidious Malice and Treachery of *Joab*, in Revenge (as he pretended) for the Death of his Brother *Abazel*, who was ſlain in the Battle of *Hebron*, upon the violent Purſuit of *Abner*; but in Truth, to gratify his Jealouſy and Revenge, for Fear of being ſupplanted in his Court Preferments.*

* This Inſtance is ſufficient to convince us, that Men abandoned to the Luſts of Avarice and Ambition, will ſtick at nothing, for they are never at eaſe ſo long as they are in the Purſuit of what they eagerly deſire, they preſs their Ends, without ever examining or conſidering the Means. There is no ſuch Thing as a Scruple of Honour or Conſcience in the Caſe; but

David was ſo exceſſively affected with the News of *Abner's* Death, that ſtretching forth his Right Hand toward Heaven, in an Appeal and Proteſtation, that he was neither privy nor conſenting to the Fact; curſed moſt bitterly the Aſſaſſin, whoever he was, his Family, and all his Accomplices: and this he did not only in Deteſtation of ſo baſe a Practice, but as a Proof that he had acted on the ſtricteſt Niceties of Faith and Honour to *Abner*.

He appointed by Proclamation a public Mourning for him, with all the Solemnities of tearing Garments, and putting on Sackcloth, he himſelf with his great Miniſters and Officers aſſiſting at the Funeral, and giving ſufficient Demonſtration, by wringing of Hands, beating their Breaſts, and other Expreſſions of Sorrow, both of the Veneration they had for *Abner*'s Memory, and their Senſe of ſo ineſtimable a Loſs, and this Conduct fully convinced the People, that *David* was far from approving or conſenting to ſo execrable an Act.

He cauſed the Body to be interred at *Hebron* with great State and Magnificence, and compoſed an Epitaph himſelf, to the Honour of the Deceas'd. He was the chief Mourner, and a Preſident to all the Reſt, who acted in Conformity to his Example. The Death of *Abner*, in ſhort, afflicted him to ſuch a Degree, that his Friends could not prevail upon him to touch either Meat or Drink that whole Day. This religious Strictneſs gained exceedingly upon the Affections of the People, and particularly upon the Friends of *Abner* to whom nothing could be more acceptable than this laſt teſtimony of *David*'s Veneration and Eſteem for his Perſon and Memory, being Eye Witneſſes that he did not treat him, in a ſlight and ignominious Way, as an Enemy, but with all the Tokens of Generoſity, Juſtice, and Friendſhip. Beſide it heightened the Character of *David*'s Piety and Benevolence, in giving Men to underſtand what they might expect from him themſelves, if *Abner*'s Caſe ſhould ever be theirs. *David* likewiſe, in this Proceeding, conſulted his Intereſt as well as his Reputation and Virtue; for afterwards, he was never ſuſpected of the leaſt Want of Good-will towards *Abner*.

When the Aſſembly were upon the Point of breaking up, *David* addreſſed them in a Manner which did Honour to the Memory of the deceaſed General, repreſenting to them firſt his own particular Unhappineſs, in being deprived of ſo valuable a Friend: and then how much the whole Nation ſuffered in the Loſs of ſo brave

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but right or wrong, how to accompliſh their Ends; and they are ſtill bolder yet in the Defence and Maintenance of a Thing ill gotten, than they were in the acquiring of it; for they can better bear a Miſcarriage in miſſing what they would have been at, than the Shame of having any Thing forced away from them that they have acquired. They will, in ſhort, ſtruggle harder to keep what they have, eſpecially when they have taſted the ſweet of it, than to get what they had not. But here's enough in a Word upon this point.

Michal

and ſo wiſe a Man; and, in ſhort, a Perſon ſo neceſſary both for War and Counſel.

He then aſſured them that God, who judged rightly would not let this Murder paſs unrevenged; adding this ſolemn Declaration, he is my Witneſs, that I am not in Condition to call *Joab* and *Abiſhai* to an Account; for they have a greater intereſt in the Army perhaps than I myſelf; but this I dare pronounce, that ſooner or later, divine Juſtice will find them out.

The extraordinary Fate of the unfortunate *Abner*, greatly affected *Iſhboſheth*, who had thereby ſuſtained the Loſs of a moſt intimate Friend, able Counſellor, expert General, in ſhort, one who had been principally acceſſary to his Advancement to the Throne, and Continuance on it. He did not indeed long ſurvive him, for he was treacherouſly murder'd ſoon afterward by *Baanah* and *Rechab*; (*a*) the Sons of *Rimmon*.

Theſe two Brothers were *Benjamites*, of the firſt Rank; who thinking that if *Iſhboſheth* were but taken out of the Way, *David* would be clear of all Competitors, concerted the Matter betwixt them, how they might effect this Purpoſe; making no Manner of Doubt, but Honours and Commands in Abundance would be conferr'd upon them as Rewards for the Performance of ſo good an Office.

At a Time, therefore, when he was alone in his Bed-chamber, taking his Afternoon's Repoſe, no Guards at Hand, and the very Servant that commonly kept the Door, wearied and faſt aſleep, they took their Opportunity to ſteal into the Chamber, (and having kill'd him in his Sleep) where they found him, cut off his Head, and poſted away with it all Night toward *Hebron*, in order to avoid the public Reſentment of the People, and to bring the Preſent ſo much the freſher to him whom they pretended to oblige.

When they came to their Journey's End, they preſented it to *David*, not a little valuing themſelves upon the merit of having deſtroyed his Competitor for the Empire, but that they were diſappointed in their towering Hopes and Expectations, the following noble and ſpirted Declartion of *David*, will ſufficiently ſhew.

Wicked wretches that you are! prepare yonrſelves immediately to receive the juſt Reward of your horrid Villainy. Do not you know that I required the

(*a*) *Rechab* and *Banaah*. Theſe Regicides are called, the Children of *Benjamin*, and Captains of Bands; and therefore, as they were not only of *Saul*'s Tribe, but Officers in his Son's Army, they had the greater Obligation to be honeſt and faithful to the Family of *Saul*; for there is great Reaſon to imagine, that *Saul*, who lived in the Borders of *Benjamin*, conferred more Favours on that Tribe, than on any of the Reſt, and might therefore expect a greater Fidelity and Eſteem from them than the others.

The diſtinguiſhing theſe Men, therefore by their Tribe, as well as by their Names, was highly proper and neceſſary, to ſhew what vile ungrateful Villians they were, and how juſtly they deſerved the ſevere and exemplary Puniſhment which David inflicted upon them.

Lame,

Murderer of Saul *according to his Demerit; who, when he had taken away that ſacred Life, had the Confidence to bring me his golden Crown for an Oſtentation of the Service he had done me in it? Nay, tho' it was at the Inſtance too of* Saul *himſelf, that he did it, to prevent the Indignity of being taken alive by his Enemies. Am not I the ſame Man, do you think, at this Day, that I was then? or am I turn'd ſo abandoned a Wretch ſince, as to Countenance the moſt profligate of Men and of Actions, and to reckon myſelf under an Obligation to you for dipping your Hands (upon my Account, as you would have it thought,) in the Blood of your Lord? The cutting of his Throat in his Bed too; and the Throat, of a Perſon ſo juſt, and ſo generous a Patron and Benefactor to you, that all the Advantages you can pretend to in this World, are but what you ſtand indebted for to his Bounty and Goodneſs; wherefore you ſhall pay for your Breach of Faith to your Maſter, and for the Scandal you would have caſt upon me, for what greater Wound could any Man give me in my Reputation, than to expoſe me for a Perſon that could take Pleaſure in the Tidings, or give Countenance to the committing of ſo barbarous and inhuman a Murder?*

Having thus remonſtrated and reprimanded them for the Commiſſion of ſo horrid a Crime, in order to impreſs the Minds of others with a due Senſe of the ſame, and prevent it for the future, *David* commanded ſome of his Guards, to ſlay the two guilty Perſons, and afterwards he cauſed the Head of *Iſhboſheth* to be laid in the Monument of *Abner*, with due Form and Solemnity.

When *David*'s Orders were executed, all the Elders and chief Officers of State, approach him, in Order to recognize his regal Authority, and lay their Lives and Fortunes at his Feet aſſuring him of the Zeal and Devotion they ever had for him, even in the Life of *Saul*, and when they had the Honour to ſerve under his Command; and farther obſerving how the Prophet *Samuel*, according to God's Order and Appointment, had declared him King, and that the Government would deſcend to his Sons after him; foretelling that the great Work of ſubduing the *Philiſtines* was reſerved for him alone, and conquently the ſettling of *Iſrael* in the Poſſeſſion of a laſting Peace and Safety.

David highly commended them for their Good-will and Diſpoſition, encouraging them to go on as they had begun, with an Aſſurance, that he, for his Part, would never give them Cauſe to repent it. *David* accompanied this Declaration with a ſplendid Treat; and when he had entertained them with all Humanity and Freedom, he ſent them away with a Summons to the whole Body of the People to meet at his Palace.

Purſuant to this general Summons there aſſembled of the Tribe of *Judah*, ſix thouſand and eight Hundred Men armed, with Shields and Lances. Theſe had been hitherto of the Party of

of *Saul*, over and above thoſe of the ſame Tribe, who had made *David* King by themſelves.

Of the Tribe of *Simeon*, ſeven thouſand, and one hundred, and Upwards.

Of the Tribe of *Levi*, four thouſand ſeven hundred, with their Leader *Jehoida*, and with theſe was the High-Prieſt *Zadock*, with two and twenty eminent Men of his Relations.

Of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, three thouſand armed Men; tho' this Tribe was altogether of Opinion, that ſome of *Saul*'s Family would ſucceed to the Government.

Of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, twenty thouſand and eight hundred, ſtrong Men, and of great Courage.

Of the Tribe of *Manaſſes*, eighteen thouſand.

Of the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, two hundred cunning Men, who could foretell Things to come, beſide twenty thouſand in Arms.

Of the Tribe of *Zebulun*, fifty thouſand choice Men, and well armed: this Tribe came over to *David* in general. All theſe uſed the ſame Armour as the Tribe of *Gad*.

Of *Naphthali*, a thouſand eminent Commanders, armed with Shield and Spear, with almoſt an innumerable Multitude of their Followers.

Of the Tribe of *Dan*, twenty eight thouſand choice Men.

Of the Tribe of *Aſher*, forty thouſand; and of the two Tribes beyond *Jordan*, and the other half of the Tribe of *Manaſſes*, that were armed with Shield, Spear, Sword and Helmet, an hundred and twenty thouſand,

This is the Muſter-roll of thoſe who came up to *David* at *Hebron*, and brought Corn, Wine and other Neceſſary Proviſions with them in Abundance, and with one Voice proclaimed him their King.

When they had ſpent three Days there in feaſting, *David* marched out at the Head of this Army to *Jeruſalem*.

The *Jebuſites*, a People of the Race of the *Canaanites*, were at that Time in Poſſeſſion of the City; and upon *David*'s Advance toward them, they ſhut their Gates, and in a Way of Defiance to *David* and his Troops, brought out their (*b*) Lame and their Blind to the Walls for the Defence of the Town.

David was ſo incenſed at this contemptuous Mockery, that he reſolv'd immediately to attack the City; reaſonably judging, that if he made an Example of the People of this Place, it would ſtrike a Terror into all others

(*b*) Lame and the Blind. The Blind and the Lame ſays *Luther*, upon this Place, were the Idols of the *Jebuſites*, which to irritate *David* they ſat upon their Walls, as their Patrons and Protectors; but as this Interpretation ſeems rather too Metaphorical, I have choſe the Conſtruction which *Joſephus* puts upon this Paſſage, Lib. vii. c. 2. viz. that they imagined their Fortreſs ſo impregnable, that by Way of Contempt, they told *David*, that their very Blind and Lame would be able to defend it againſt him and all his Forces; and this is a Senſe ſo extremely plain and obvious that the renowned *Bochart* wonders how any Man of Learning, can require, or ſeek for any other.

Hiram

for the Future. Accordingly he advanced with the Flower of his Army, and, upon a general Aſſault, entered the lower Town: but the Caſtle ſtill made an obſtinate Reſiſtance. *David* finding it to be a ſtrong Place, the Attempt hazardous, and his Honour at Stake upon the carrying of it, bethought himſelf of a Means to inflame the Courage of his Men by ſome extraordinary Propoſal of Honour and Reward; and by that Incentive to kindle an Emulation among them.

To effect this, he paſſed his royal Word, That he who firſt, mounted the Wall, and made good his Station, ſhould have the Command of the Army. Stimulated by the mighty Promiſe the *Iſraelites* joined in a fierce Attack, and a generous Contention aroſe who ſhould merit that Honour.

At length *Joab* mounted the Wall. and carried the Prize; ſo that he called upon the King from the Top of the Battlement to fulfill his Promiſe.

Having expelled the Enemy from the Caſtle, and repaired the Town, the King gave to *Jeruſalem* the Name of the City of *David*, and made it his Place of Reſidence during his Reign.

This memorable Tranſaction happened after he had ruled ſeven Years and ſix Months over the Tribe of *Judah* in *Hebron*.

Upon the Eſtabliſhment of his Court at *Jeruſalem*, Succeſs attended his Affairs every Day more and more; for God in his Providence deſigning it for a Seat of Glory, had a peculiar Kindneſs for the Place.

(c) Hiram King of *Tyre*, awed by the great Succeſs of *David*, ſent an Ambaſſy, upon a Treaty of Friendſhip and Alliance, with Preſents likewiſe of Cedar Wood, Builders and Maſter-workmen toward the erecting of a Palace for him at *Jeruſalem*.

David fortified the upper Town, and laid that and the Citadel both in one, with a Wall about them, and gave the Command of it to *Joab*. He was the firſt who changed the Name of it, and it was after the caſting out of the *Jebuſites*: for in the Days of *Abraham*, it was called *Solyma*; and ſome will have it that *Homer* pointed at this City, when he ſpeaks of the People of *Solyma*; for the Word *Hieron*, or Temple, in the *Hebrew* ſignifies, Security, or a Fortreſs.

Now the whole Time of the War with the *Philiſtines*, from the *Iſraelites* dividing their Lands, under the Command of *Joſhua*, to the Day here ſpoken of, was reckoned to be five hundred and fifteen Years; but the Barbarians kept the Poſſeſſion of *Jeruſalem* all along, till they were driven out by *David*.

(c) *Hiram* King of *Tyre*. The primitive Name of this Prince was *Abibalus*, but before he entered into a League of Amity with *David*, he changed it into *Hiram*, that ſo it might be the ſtanding Name of him and his Succeſſors, as *Pharaoh*, and afterwards *Ptolemy* in Egypt, *Abimelech* among the *Philiſtines*, and *Cæſar* among the *Romans*: and his ſending to *David* only under this Name, ſeems to be the true Reaſon why no other Name is mentioned in Scripture.

Mulberry

Now there was among the *Jebuſites* a very rich Man, one Orphan, who had done many good Offices for the *Iſraelites*, and deſerved ſingularly well from *David* himſelf. This Man therefore upon the Sacking of the Town, was preſerved by the King from the Heat and Fury of the Soldiers, after his Settlement at *Jeruſalem*.

David took ſeveral Wives, beſides Concubines, more than he had done before; by whom he had eleven Children, *Shammuah*, *Shobab*, *Nathan*, *Solomon*, *Ibhar*, *Eliſhua*, *Nepheg*, *Japhia*, *Eliſhama*, *Eliada*, *Eliphalet*, and a Daughter named *Thamar*, who was the Siſter of *Abſalom*. Nine of the Sons were lawfully begotten, but the two laſt by Concubines.

The *Philiſtines*, ever avowed Enemies to the *Iſraelites*, no ſooner heard that *David* was acknowledged as King by the Tribes in general, than they muſtered their Forces, and encamped in a Place called the Valley of the Giants, not far from *Jeraſalem*.

Upon this Occaſion, *David*, who would do nothing without Counſel and Direction from above, appointed the High-Prieſt to inform himſelf in the Way that God had preſcribed, what might be the Event of this Battle.

Having received an encouraging Anſwer, he immediately advanced againſt the Foe, and fell upon them in Surprize, and charged them with ſuch Vehemence, that a total Defeat ſoon enſued, with great Slaughter on the Side of the *Philiſtines*.

This was a ſignal Victory obtained without much Oppoſition, but it muſt not therefore be inferred, that the Army of the *Philiſtines* was inconſiderable in Point of Numbers, or the Valour of their Men, for *Syria* and *Phœnicia*, and ſeveral other warlike Nations, were all engaged in the Confederacy. It had been otherwiſe, if after ſo many Defeats, and the Loſs of ſo many Thouſands, they could never have brought an Army into the Field again; and we find, that immediately after this Defeat, they invaded the *Iſraelites* with thrice the Number they had before, and had the Confidence to poſt themſelves in the very ſame Place again.

The King, after his conſtant Cuſtom, conſulted the Oracle as formerly, and received Orders to lie ſtill with his Army in a certain Wood, called The Grove of Mourning, or the *(d)* Mulberry-trees, nor far from the Enemy; and not to move from thence, or make any Attempt upon any Occaſion whatſoever, till he found the Branches of the Trees in

(*d*) Mulberry Trees. God indeed is left to his own Pleaſure what Signs he ſhall think fit to give his People, upon any Occaſion for their Good; but the more Arbitrary and Uncommon any Sign is, the more it ſeems to have proceeded from God. Though, therefore, the ſound of People's going upon the Tops of Trees, be a thing not ſo congruous to our Conceptions, yet it does not from hence follow, that it was not the real Sign which God gave *David*, becauſe the Stranger the Phenomenon was, the greater Aſſurance is conveyed of the divine Interpoſition in his Favour.

Raiſe

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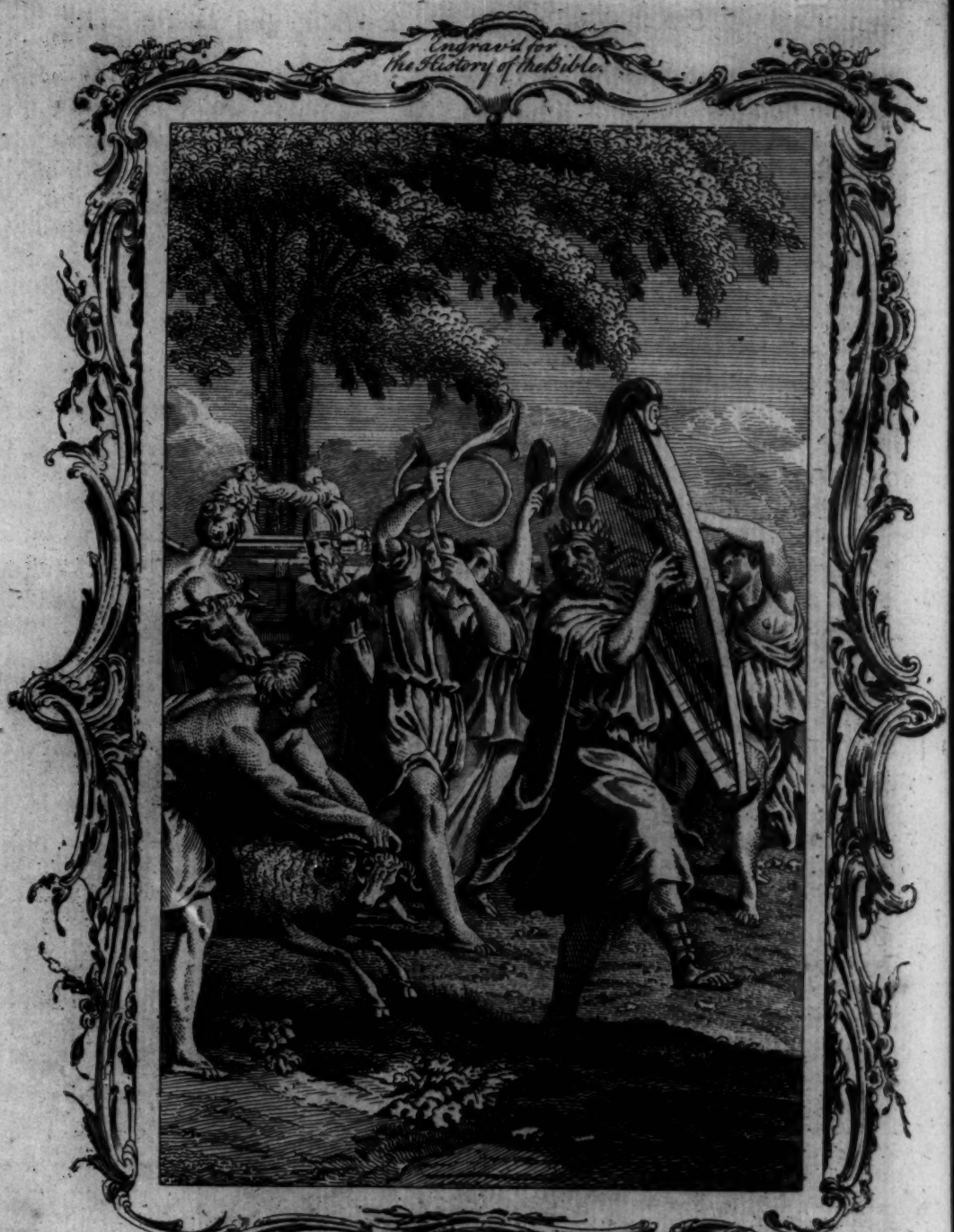

DAVID DANCING *before the* ARK, II Sam: 6,14.

an Agitation, as of their own Accord, and without a Breath of Air ſtirring to cauſe that Motion.

David punctually obeyed the divine Command; and as ſoon as the Providental Sign was given him, he advanced, as to a certain and predetermined Victory. The *Philiſtines* gave Way on the very firſt Attack, but when they came to cloſe Fight, they ran with the *Iſraelites* at their Backs, and their Swords in their Reins.

They were purſued with great Slaughter to *Gazar*, a Town ſituated upon the Borders of either Party. They then pillaged the Camp, where they made themſelves Maſters of a prodigious Booty, with little Trouble or Hazard, ſeizing their Idols among other Things, and breaking them to Pieces.

This War being ſpeedily and happily finiſhed, the King was pleaſed, by the Advice and Aſſent of his great Council, to draw together the whole Force he could *(e)* raiſe out of all the Tribes under his Juriſdiction, together with the Prieſts and Levites; and to march with this great Body directly to *Kirjath-Jearim*, and bring the Ark of God from thence to *Jeruſalem*, that being the Place deſigned for holy Worſhip, and for the Celebration of all Sacrifices, Ceremonies and religious Rites for the Time to come.

The Tribes being met according to Appointment, and all Things in Readineſs for the Removal of the Ark (*David* himſelf alſo aſſiſting at the Solemnity) the Prieſts took it out of the Houſe of *Aminadab*, and laying it upon a new Waggon, with Oxen to draw it, left the Ark in Charge with their Children and Relations. The King himſelf went foremoſt; and was followed by a Multitude of People, glorifying God in ſacred Hymns and Pſalms.

And thus was the Ark conducted towards *Jeruſalem*, after the Faſhion of the Country; dancing as they went to the Sound of Harps, Cymbals, and other Muſical-Inſtruments.

As they were upon the Way, at a certain Place called the Threſhing-Floor of *Chidon*, or *Nachon*, the Oxen ſtaggering with the Ark, *(f)*

(e) Raiſe. The Reaſon why *David* ſummoned ſo many of his principal Miniſters and Officers to attend him in bringing back the Ark, is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been, that the Minds of the young People, who perhaps had heard little or nothing of the Ark, on Account of its Abſence, might be impreſſed with a ſuitable Veneration for it, in viewing the ſplendid Triumph, which was made upon its return.

(f) *Uzzah*. What ſhall we ſay to the Fate of *Uzzah*, or what probable Cauſe can be aſſigned for his ſudden and untimely End? are Queſtions which naturally ariſe on reading this Paſſage; but he ſeems to have been guilty of a triple Tranſgreſſion of the divine Will. The Ark, as ſome ſay, was by his Direction placed in a Cart, though it ought to have been carried by Staves upon the Shoulders of the *Levites*; he, without any proper Deſignation Adventures to attend it, for there is no Proof in Scripture that he was a *Levite*; and when he thought it in Danger of falling, officiouſly put forth his Hand and laid hold on it,

which

Uzzah put forth his Hand to keep it from overturning, and was immediately ſtruck dead by divine Vengeance for preſuming to touch it, as he was not in holy Orders.

This exemplary Death of *Uzzah* was a great Affliction to *David* himſelf, and to all the People; and they called the Place *Perez-Uzzah*, or the Breach of *Uzzah*; which Name it bore many hundred Years. *David* was ſo affected with the awful Judgment inflicted on *Uzzah*, that leſt it might peradventure be his Caſe, if he ſhould receive the Ark into the City (his Fault being only the Temerity of touching it) he ſuſpended the carrying of it to *Jeruſalem*, and turned off with it upon the Way, into the Houſe of a certain good Man and a Levite, whoſe Name was *Obed-Edom*, and there it lay depoſited for three whole Months, in which Time it was obſerved, that every Thing proſpered in the Family, and that the Maſter of it grew Rich to Admiration.

It was generally obſerved, how amazingly *Obed-Edom* was improved in his Fortune ſince he had the Ark under his Roof, and that of a very poor Man, he became on a ſudden conſiderable for Wealth, and in ſo good a Condition, that he was the Wonder as well as the Envy of his Neighbours.

The Rumour of *Obed-Edom*'s Succeſs reaching the King's Ear, greatly encouraged him, inſomuch that fearleſs of Danger, he reſumed his former Purpoſe of tranſporting it to *Jeruſalem*, which was done after this manner.

The Prieſts had the Charge of carrying it, and ſeven Choirs of ſinging Men, according to the King's Appointment, marching before it, *David* himſelf bearing his Part in the Conſort, with Dancing and Singing to his Harp: this his Wife *Michal* (the Daughter of the late King *Saul*) utterly diſliked, as an Action of too much Levity, and below the Dignity of *David*'s Character.

The Ark being brought to the City, it was diſpoſed of in the Tabernacle, which *David* had made on Purpoſe for it. Upon the Occaſion of this Feſtival, there were Sacrifices and Peace-offerings in Abundance,

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which was forbidden on Pain of Death. And when we conſider further, that the Ark had continued ſo long in Obſcurity, that the People had in a Manner loſt all Senſe of a divine Power reſiding in it, we have no leſs Reaſon to wonder, that God, being diſpoſed to retrieve the ancient Honour of that ſacred Veſſel, and to curb the heinous Prophanations of it for the future, ſhould ſingle out one, the moſt culpable of many; one, who in three Inſtances was then violating his Commands, to be a Monument of his Diſpleaſure againſt a wilful Ignorance, or a rude Contempt of his Precept; that by ſuch an Example, he might inſpire both Prieſts and People with a ſacred Dread of his Majeſty, and a profound Veneration for his Myſteries. Happy were it for us, however, if we could account for the Operations of God with the ſame Facility, that we can for the Actions of his Saints; but his *Counſels are a great Deep*, and his *Judgments*, though always juſt, are *paſt finding out*.

and ſufficient for the whole Multitude: for there was not a Man, Woman or Child there, who had not a Cake, and a Part of the Fleſh of the Sacrifice given them; and when they had eaten plentifully, *David* returned to his Palace.

He was met on the Way by his Wife *Michal*, who uttered many ſincere Wiſhes for his Succeſs; but ſtill reproved him for dancing, as unlike a King, and alſo for uncovering himſelf in the Eyes of his Hand-maids and Servants.

David told her that he was not aſhamed of doing any Thing that he knew was acceptable to that God who advanced him to the Throne of *Iſrael*, in Preference to her Father, and all other Pretenders; and that he would ſing and dance again and again, without regarding at all how either ſhe or her Hand-maids took it. *Michal* had no Children by *David*; but by her other Huſband, to whom *Saul* had given her in Marriage, upon taking her away from *David*, ſhe had five Sons.

David encouraged by the frequent Succeſs with which God crowned all his Undertakings, was ſo ſenſible of God's Goodneſs towards him upon the daily Succeſs of whatever he took in Hand, that he began to make it Matter of Conſcience to live in a Palace of Cedar himſelf, that was as ſtately as Art and Ornament could make it, and at the ſame Time to lodge the Ark in the Tabernacle; ſo that he reſolved to erect and dedicate a Temple to God's Honour and Worſhip; and according to the Prediction of *Moſes*, he communicated the Deſign to the Prophet *Nathan*; who, upon Counſel and Advice, encouraged him to proceed upon the Work; for he might be ſure of God's ſpecial Favour and Providence along with him. Theſe Words ſerved more and more to animate and confirm *David* in his Purpoſe and Deſign.

In the Night following, the Word of the Lord came unto *Nathan*, ſaying, *Go, and tell* David, *that I accept of his Good-will in being the firſt Propoſer of erecting a Temple unto my Service; yet as the Neceſſity of his Wars hath made him a Man of Blood, I cannot permit the doing of this Work in his Days; but let him know, that after a long and happy Life, he ſhall commit the Care of the Undertaking to his Son and Succeſſor* Solomon; *whom I ſhall be as tender of as a Father can be of his own Child, and continue the Government in the Line of his Family for ever;* * *or in caſe of his committing Iniquity, I will only puniſh the Tranſgreſſion with Bodily Sickneſs or Famine, not with a total Rejection, as I did* Saul.

* For ever. Though theſe Words in their primary Signification, plainly relate to the Continuance of *David*'s Family upon the Throne of *Iſrael*; Yet in a more extenſive Senſe, they are no obſcure Prophecy of the Kingdom of the Meſſiah; as the Expreſſion for ever, can only be applied to him who is the eternal Son of God, and of whoſe Dominion there ſhall be no End.

The Prophet, without any Delay, acquitted himſelf of his Commiſſion; and it was ſo welcome a Meſſage to *David*, to be aſſured that the Succeſſion was ſecured to his Poſterity, and the Honour of his Family ſo graciouſly provided for, that he betook himſelf immediately to the Ark of God, fell down upon his Face, and offered this Prayer and Thankſgiving.

Lord, thy holy Name be praiſed for all thy Benefits and Mercies! Thou that haſt taken thy Servant from the Sheepfold, and advanced him to this Height of Dignity and Power!

Lord I bleſs thee for all this; for thy continued Providences to myſelf, and thy Promiſes to my Poſterity: and for thy multiplyed Deliverances and Protections to thine own People.

David's late Series of Succeſs, induced him again to meditate Hoſtilities againſt the *Philiſtines*, to which he was not a little encouraged by a Prediction That he ſhould overcome all his Enemies, and leave his Kingdom in Peace to his Succeſſor.

In order to proſecute this War, he appointed a Day and Place for a Rendezvous, ſummoned his Troops together; and when he was in a Condition to march, made an Incurſion into the Enemy's Country, overcame them in a pitched Battle, took Poſſeſſion of a good Part of their Lands, and annexed them to the Juriſdiction of the *Iſraelites*. He made War with the *Moabites*, deſtroyed two thirds of their Army, took the reſt, and made them Tributaries.

After which he overthrew *Hadadezer*, the Son of *Rehob*, King of *Zobah*, whom he encountered not far from the *Euphrates*, and killed him twenty thouſand Foot, and five thouſand Horſe; taking alſo a thouſand Chariots, of which he reſerved only an hundred for his own Uſe, and burnt the reſt.

CHAP. V.

David's *Succeſs againſt the* Syrians. *He ſhews peculiar Tokens of Favour towards* Mephiboſheth, *the Son of* Jonathan, *for his Father's Sake. Wages War with the* Ammonites. Joab's *Victory over them. The King of* Syria's *total Defeat. Caſe of* David *and* Bathſheba, Tamar *raviſhed by* Ammon. Abſalom *her Brother takes away his Life, in Revenge for the Injury done to his Family.*

THE King of *Syria* and *Damaſcus* no ſooner heard that *David* had proclaimed War againſt his Friend and Ally, the King of *Zobah*, than he diſpatched a very conſiderable Body of Forces in order to ſuccour him, and remove, if poſſible, the Seat of the War.

After ſeveral Skirmiſhes, he came to a Battle with *David* near *Euphrates*, where he loſt the greater Part of his Army, twenty thouſand being cut off, the reſt ſaved themſelves by flight.

Nicolaus mentions this ſame *Adad*, in the fourth Book of his Hiſtory as fol-

follows. *A long Time after, one* Adad, *a valiant Man, and a Native of the Place, had the Command of* Damaſcus *and* Syria, Phœnicia *only excepted.*

There happen'd to be a War betwixt this ſame Adad *and* David, *the King of the* Jews; *and ſeveral Battles fought between them; but in the End,* Adad *was overcome at the* Euphrates, *behaving himſelf with the Reſolution of a brave Prince, and a great Captain.*" And the ſame Author, treating further of his Poſterity, ſays, *That the Government was handed down from Father to Son, to the tenth Generation; the Succeſſor ſtill receiving the Father's Name with the Empire, as the* Ptolemies *among the* Egyptians.

The third, in order from this Adad, *and the greateſt Man of the Family, out of a generous Zeal to repair the Honour that his Grandfather loſt by this Defeat, pour'd in an Army upon the* Jews, *and laid waſte* Samaria.

The Hiſtorian was not miſtaken in this Part of his Relation; for this is the *Adad* who invaded *Samaria* in the reign of *Ahab* King of *Iſrael*.

With this victorious Army *David* over-ran *Damaſcus* and the reſt of *Syria*; left Garriſons behind him where he ſaw convenient; laid the Country under Contribution, and ſo return'd home again; carrying with him to *Jeruſalem* the Golden Quivers, and other rich Equipage that were taken from *Adad's* Guards; and dedicating the Spoil and Trophies to God, in Acknowledgment of the Victory he had obtain'd through his Favour and Protection.

All theſe valuable Spoils, and much more, were afterwards taken by *Syſack*, the King of *Egypt*, upon the Sacking of *Jeruſalem*, in his War with *Rehoboam*, *David's* Grandſon.

During *David's* extraordinary Succeſs, through the Bleſſing of the Almighty God upon his Arms, he invaded *Betah* and *Berothai*, the two moſt conſiderable Cities in the whole Dominions of *Hadadezer*; both which he took by Aſſault, with Gold and Silver, to an ineſtimable Value; beſide a great Quantity of a Sort of Braſs, eſteemed of a greater Value than even Gold itſelf.

This was the Metal that *Solomon* afterward made Uſe of for his beautiful Baſons, and a huge Veſſel, called the Sea, upon the finiſhing and adorning the Temple.

Toi, King of *Hamath*, alarmed and terrified at *David's* Victory over the King of *Syria*; and thinking it moſt Prudent to ſecure the Intereſt and Favour of ſo powerful and ſucceſsful a Prince, diſpatched his Son *Joram* to him, with a Compliment of Congratulation for the Victory gained over their common Enemy (for ſo was *Hadadezer* reputed) with Inſtructions to ſollicit a League of Amity and fair Underſtanding betwixt them; not forgetting ſeveral magnificent Preſents in Veſſels of Gold, Silver, and Braſs, Antique and Curious, to the Higheſt Degree of Excellency and Perfection. *David* accepted both of the Propoſals and the Preſents, receiving and diſmiſſing the Ambaſſador, to the Honour and Satisfaction of both Parties; but ſtill dedicated to God, all the

Spoils

Spoils of Gold and Silver, and precious Things, that were taken from the Enemy, as to the Cauſe of the Victory. Nor was *David* ſucceſsful only in his own perſonal Adventures and Undertakings, but God proſpered him in all his Commiſſions alſo, executed by Deputies and Lieutenants; as in the Caſe of *Abiſhai*, *Joab's* Brother, who was ſent out with an Army againſt the *Idumeans*; and by God's Aſſiſtance not only ſubdued them, but after eighteen thouſand of them were killed upon the Spot, kept them in awe with Garriſons, as a Check upon them; charged the Land with a Contribution, and taxed the People by the Head.

David, during the Courſe of his regal Adminiſtration attended moſt punctually to the ſtricteſt Laws of Equity piouſly reſolved to eſtabliſh his Throne in Truth and Righteouſneſs. He made *Joab*, the Son of *Zeruiah*, his general, and *Jehoſaphat*, the Son of *Abilud*, the Keeper of his Records.

He choſe out of the Houſe of *Phineas*, *Abiathar* and *Zadock*, who were his Friends, to be his Prieſts, and *Seraiah* for Secretary. *Benai* the Son of *Jehoiada* commanded his Body-Guards, and the King's elder Sons were ſtill incorporated into that Body.

Having made the neceſſary Regulations in his domeſtic Concerns, and ſettle the Officers of his State, *David* turned his Attention upon his old and dear Friend and Aſſociate *Jonathan*, and upon the ſolemn League of mutual Amity that had paſſed betwixt them; for he had this Virtue among many others, that he never forgot an Obligation to a Friend; but looked upon a Return for paſt Benefits as the moſt ſacred of all Debts.

Upon this Conſideration, he made diligent Enquiry, what Sons, Friends, or Relations, *Jonathan* had left behind him, that he might find Matter for his Gratitude to work upon. In Purſuance of this Inquiry, there was brought to him one *Ziba*, formerly a Servant and a Freeman of *Saul's*, as the moſt likely Perſon to give him Information.

The King aſked him if he knew of any of *Jonathan's* Family yet living, and where to find them; for he lay under an Obligation to them, which he would gladly repay?

Ziba made Anſwer, that he had a Son yet alive, whoſe Name was *Mephiboſheth*; who by a Miſchance happened to be lame of one Leg; for that upon the News of that bloody Battle, wherein his Grand-Father, and his Father, were ſlain, the Nurſe took him up in a Fright to run away with him, and ſtumbling, let him fall out of her Arms, and hurt him.

Upon farther Examination the King had Notice that he was brought up with one *Machir*, in the City of *Lo-debar*, and there he was at preſent.

Mephiboſheth being ſent for; who, when he approached the Royal Preſence, proſtrated himſelf at the King's Feet, and did him Reverence.

The King bad him be of good Cheer, and hope for better Days; aſſuring him of all the Comfort he could

could wiſh for from the Favour of his Prince. Accordingly he appointed him immediately to be put in Poſſeſſion of his Father's and Grandfather's Eſtate, gave *Ziba* Charge to look after it, and take Care of the Grounds, and from time to time to receive the Profits, and bring them to *Jeruſalem*. *Mephiboſheth*, after this, lived in the King's Houſe, ſat conſtantly at the ſame Table with him, and *David* gave him *Ziba*, and fifteen Sons that he had, with twenty others belonging to him, for his Servants.

Ziba, having received his Commiſſion, did his Duty, and went his Way; promiſing to govern himſelf in all Things according to his Order and Inſtructions. But the Son of *Jonathan* continu'd ſtill at *Jeruſalem* with *David*, and was treated in all Reſpects as a Child of the Family; ſo great a Tenderneſs had *David* for any Thing that had a relation to *Jonathan*. Thus it was with *Mephiboſheth*, to whom was born a Son whoſe Name was *Micha*.

About this Time dy'd *Nahaſh*, the King of the *Ammonites*, a Friend and Ally of *David*'s; and *Hnaun* his Son ſucceeded him. *David* upon this Revolution, ſent Embaſſadors to him to condole his Loſs, comfort him in his Affliction, and aſſure him of the ſame Friendſhip and Reſpect to himſelf that had been formerly paid to his Father.

The Chiefs of the *Ammonites*, eſteeming the ingenuous Conduct of *David*, as proceeding from a malicious and hoſtile Deſign, endeavoured by all Means to irritate their King, with Calumnies againſt *David*; and to put Jealouſies in his Head, that his Servants were not in Truth Embaſſadors but Spies; who under pretext of a Compliment of State, were ſent to explore the Strength and Condition of the Country; and that therefore, without giving any heed to fair Words, he ſhould do well to be cautious and circumſpect betimes, before Things were gone beyond Recovery. *Hanun* over-rul'd by this Counſel, repugnant as it was both to Truth and Reaſon, ſent the Embaſſadors back again with all the Indignities of Scorn and vile Uſage imaginable. They cut off (*g*) one half of their Beards, one half of their Veſts, and ſo diſmiſ-

(*g*) One Half of their Beards. In a Country where the Hair was looked upon as ſo great an Ornament, that many would rather die than Part with it, the cutting it off was certainly one of the greateſt indignities that human Malice could invent; and the ſhaving only one half of their Beards, which muſt make them look ſtill more ridiculous; and cutting their Garments even to the Middle, and thereby expoſing their Nakedneſs, was an inſult of ſo heinous and public a Nature, that it would ill have become a Man of *David*'s martial Spirit, and juſt Sentiments of Honour, to let it paſs without Puniſhment. How great a Diſgrace the Loſs of the Hair was accounted in ancient Times, is evident from the Account of *Damaſcenus*, who ſays, that among the *Indians*, the King commanded the greateſt Offenders to be ſhaven, as the heavieſt Puniſhment that could be inflicted upon them: and *Plutarch* to like purpoſe tells us, that whenever a Soldier among the *Lacedemonians* was convicted of Cowardice, he was obliged to go with one Part of his Upper Lip ſhaved, and

ſed them in that Dreſs, with the moſt reproachful Behaviour not deigning them an Anſwer. *David* was juſtly provoked at the Indignity offered to his Embaſſy, that he immediately declared his Reſolution publickly to right himſelf upon the *Ammonites* by an open War, and to call their King to an Account for what he had done. The Principals and Allies of the *Ammonites* were ſo conſcious to themſelves, that their Perfidy, and Breach of Faith, together with the Scandalous Manner of it, was wholly unpardonable; that upon the firſt News of *David's* Determination to vindicate himſelf by Arms, they found themſelves neceſſiated, in their own Defence, to encounter Force with Force, and ſo prepar'd for a War.

They ſent their Embaſſadors to *Syrus*, the King of *Meſopotamia*, with a thouſand Silver Talents to bring him into the Alliance; which he accepted of, and engaged alſo the King of *Zobah*. Theſe two Kings had betwixt them about twenty thouſand Foot. They likewiſe purchaſed the Aſſiſtance of the King of *Maacah*, and of *Iſhtob*, who had two and twenty thouſand Men in Arms.

Notwithſtanding the mighty Preparation of the *Ammonites* in Conjunction with many Potent Allies, *David's* Heart failed him not, he knew he had a gracious God to truſt to; his Cauſe was Good, and the Injury he had received intolerable; wherefore he was reſolved to caſt himſelf upon God's Providence, and the Juſtice of his Arms for Satisfaction; ſo that committing the Management of the War to *Joab*, he ſent him away with the Choiceſt of his Troops againſt the Enemy.

He marched directly towards their Capital City *Rabatha*, and encamped before it. The Enemy marched forth out of the Town, and divided into two Bodies; the one conſiſting of Auxiliaries, which they drew up in the open Field; the other, being compoſed only of *Ammonites*, ranged themſelves before the Gates that looked toward the *Iſraelites*.

Joab conſidering this Diſpoſition of the Enemy's Army, diſpoſed of his Troops likewiſe in the ſame Order; and at the Head of the beſt Men he had, he himſelf prepared to charge *Syrus*, and the confederate King's, with one Diviſion, whilſt he gave his Brother *Abiſhai* the Command of the other, with Orders to attack the *Ammonites*; having agreed upon it before hand that in caſe *Syrus* ſhould get the Better of *Joab*, *Abiſhai* ſhould come in to his Relief; and *Joab* to ſend *Abiſhai* if he ſhould be preſs'd by the *Ammonites*.

Joab hereupon diſmiſs'd his Brother, encouraging him to behave

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the other not: nay, even at this Day, no greater Indignity can be offered to a *Perſian*, than to cauſe his Bread to be ſhaved; and *Tavernier* tells us, that when the *Sophi* cauſed an Ambaſſador of *Aureng-zebe's* to be uſed in this Manner, telling him that he was not worthy to wear a Beard, the Emperor (in the Manner as *David* here did) moſt highly reſented the Affront, that was given to him in the Perſon of his Ambaſſador.

himſelf

himſelf valiantly, and to make good the Reputation both of the Cauſe and of the Action. *Joab* made the Onſet upon *Syrus*, who ſtood very bravely at firſt; but Numbers of his Men falling, the reſt fled, and the *Ammonites* upon the very ſight of their diſorder, betook themſelves likewiſe to flight, after the Example of their Fellows, without ſtaying for the coming up of *Abiſhai*, and retreated as faſt as they could into the Town; ſo that *Joab*, after a dreadful Havock of the Enemy, returned to *Jeruſalem* with his victorious Army.

Tho' the *Ammonites* received ſo great a Shock from the Army of *Iſrael*, which had ſo frequently ſhewn the vaſt Superioty over them, they ſtill maintained their Enmity, and determined upon being revenged. Accordingly they ſent to *Hadadezer*, King of the *Syrians*, beyond *Euphrates*, and agreed with him for an auxiliary Army upon certain Terms. *Shobach* was his Lieutenant-General, over an Army of eighty thouſand Foot, and ten thouſand Horſe.

David receiving Intelligence of the mighty Strength of the *Ammonites*, judged it improper to make War any longer by his Deputies, ſo that he himſelf paſſed the River *Jordan* with the whole Army, and joined Battle with the Enemy, killed them forty thouſand Foot, and ſeven thouſand Horſe, and came off a Conqueror; *Shobach*, the General of *Hadadezer*, received a Wound in this Battle, of which proved mortal.

The People of *Meſopotamia*, upon this unfortunate Overthrow, ſent Ambaſſadors with Preſents and Addreſſes to *David*, and delivered themſelves up; and the Action being over, and the Winter drawing on, he returned again ſafely to *Jeruſalem*.

The King of *Iſrael* determined, by the Bleſſing of God, on the Conqueſt and Subjection of all his Enemies, the Beginning of the following Spring, diſpatched *Joab* his General, with a full Commiſſion to proſecute the War againſt the *Ammonites*.

This Commiſſion he executed with great Succeſs and Punctuality; for he not only laid Waſte their Country, but having driven them into *Rabbah*, their Metropolis for Safety, he laid cloſe Seige to the Place, with a very powerful Army.

David was undoubtedly a juſt and pious Man, and a ſtrict Obſerver of the Laws of his Country; but yet, as the beſt of Men are liable to Temptations, and the Influence of their Paſſions, at this Time he had the Misfortune to fall in a grievous Sin; the Occaſion of which was as follows,

As he was walking for his Diverſion one Day, toward the Cool of the Evening, upon his Terras, he happened to deſcry a Woman bathing herſelf in her own Houſe, who was a Perſon of moſt exquiſite Shape and Beauty, by Name *Bathſheba*.

He fell in Love with her immediately, and under the Influence of a paſſionate Appetite, had her brought to his Bed.

Soon after this, ſhe found herſelf with Child, and deſired the King to conſider of ſome Method for the Concealment

cealment of it; as otherwiſe ſhe muſt ſuffer Death by the Laws of the Country.

Uriah, *Bathſheba's* Huſband, and Armour-bearer to *Joab*, was ſent for by the King, who enquired of him concerning the State of the Army, and the Succeſs of the Siege. Having informed the King, that there was every reaſonable Proſpect, he entertained him, and then diſmiſing him, bade him go Home to his Wife, but finding afterwards that he paſs'd away that Night in the Palace, and among his Guards, he aſked him, *How it came to paſs that having been ſo long away from his Wife, he had not rather choſen to go Home; than ſpend his Time elſewhere, ſo contrary to the Practice of all other Men under his Circumſtances.*

Sir, replied he, *I did not think it fair and honourable to indulge myſelf in the Arms of my Wife, at the ſame Time when my General and Fellow-ſoldiers lie in an Enemy's Country upon the Ground.*" The King then told him, *He ſhould now ſtay there one Night more, and the next Day he would ſend him back again to the Army.*

When the King went to Supper, he cauſed *Uriah* to ſup with him, and made him drink ſo freely, that although he became thereby almoſt drunk, yet he never thought of going to his Wife all this while, but ſpent that Night again in the Court, as he had done the Former.

This highly incenſed *David*; inſomuch, that he wrote to *Joab*, that he was much diſſatisfied with *Uriah*, and would have him puniſhed according to his Deſert; and then propoſed to him a Method to bring it about, without giving any Suſpicion that it was done by his Order; the Contrivance was this. *David* appointed *Joab* to command him upon the firſt dangerous Attack, where his Companions might deſert him and leave him to certain Deſtruction from the Enemy.

This Letter he gave to *Uriah*, under his own Hand and Seal, to be deliver'd to *Joab*; who, upon the Receipt, followed the King's Direction, and put *Uriah*, upon a deſperate Attack, where he knew the Enemies to be ſtrongeſt, with ſeveral brave Men to back him, for the Countenance of the Deſign; *Joab* promiſing to ſecond him with the whole Army, upon the leaſt Breach or Poſſibility of Entrance into the Town. To enforce the iniquitous Purpoſe, *Joab* reminded him of the great Reputation he had already acquired by his military Conduct, and urged the preſent Opportunity of adding to his Fame, and enhancing his Eſteem with his King and Maſter.

Uriah, with great Chearfulneſs and Aſſurance, undertook the Poſt, while *Joab* gave his Companions private Orders to withdraw, and leave him as ſoon as they found themſelves in any Danger. The *Iſraelites* preſſing hard upon the Wall, put the *Ammonites* into a dreadful Apprehenſion that they would force the Town; whereupon they threw open their Gates, and made a deſperate Sally. This ſerved as a kind of Signal to *Uriah's* Companions,

panions, who according to *Joab's* Order, baſely abandoned their Leader at the Inſtant of eminent Danger, and left that valiant Man to fall a Victim to confederate Fraud and Ingratitude.

He did all the Execution that was poſſible to be done by a ſingle Man againſt Numbers; and after ſeveral Wounds received, fell like a Man of Honour, with his Face to the Enemy.

Some few of his Friends, who alſo were aſhamed to fly, not being made privy to the Plot, fell with him at the ſame Time.

David's Deſign being thus executed, *Joab* ſent him an Expreſs, giving an Account that to make ſhort Work of a Siege, that was otherwiſe likely to be tedious, he had given an Aſſault to the Town, loſt Men in the Attempt, and was at laſt beaten off, and forced back again to the Camp. Now, ſaid *Joab* to the Meſſenger, *If you find the King diſpleaſed at the News you carry him, tell him withal, That* Uriah *fell in the Attack.*

David upon the hearing of this Story, was greatly incenſed, and thus beſpoke the Meſſenger, *What! for Men with their naked Bodies to think of ſtorming ſtone Walls? Why did they not rather make Uſe of Mines or Engines? One would think they might have taken the Example of* Ahimelech, *the Son of* Gideon, *for a Warning, that was ſlain at* Thebes, *by a Piece of Mill-ſtone thrown down upon his Head, by an old Woman from the Battlements. The Man was otherwiſe very brave; but his Temerity brought him to a ſhameful End; for in all theſe Caſes, Caution is as neceſſary as Courage, and the ſafeſt Counſels are the beſt.*

All People in the Buſineſs of War, ſhould do well to conſult Hiſtory and Experience, what has generally ſucceeded well, and what otherwiſe, and to conſider upon what Point the Streſs lies, either of the one, or of the other, and thus act accordingly.

While the King was thus expreſſing his Reſentment and Diſpleaſure at the ill Management of the Action, the Meſſenger took an Occaſion privately to tell him of the Death of *Uriah.*

Well, ſaid *David, theſe are common Accidents; the Chance of War is various, and Soldiers muſt content themſelves to take the Beſt and Worſt by Turns.*

Do you tell Joab *what I ſay; but tell him moreover, that for the future I would rather have him do the Buſineſs by caſting up Words, or by Machines, than by open Force.* Works

But let him know upon the Whole, that I would have the City razed and levelled with the Ground, and the Inhabitants all put to the Sword, without ſparing ſo much as one individual Perſon.

With theſe Inſtructions the Meſſenger went preſently away to *Joab.*

Upon the News of *Uriah's* Death, *Bathſheba* mourned ſeveral Days for her Huſband, but as ſoon as her days of Mourning were over, *David* took her to Wife, and had by her a Male Child ſoon after.

This Match was ſo far from being acceptable and well-pleaſing to God, that

that he was highly offended at it, and gave the Prophet *Nathan* to underſtanding his Diſpleaſure in a Dream; blaming *David* exceedingly for what he had done.

Nathan being a Man of great Diſcernment, and conſidering how little Regard Princes commonly have in the Career of their Paſſions to the Rules of Juſtice, choſe rather to communicate his Meſſage to *David* in mild Terms, by way of Alluſion, than abruptly accoſt him by a direct Denunciation of the Diſpleaſure and Threatening of the Almighty; addreſſing him thus.

There were two Men, who lived in the ſame City; the one had abundance of Flocks and Herds of all Sorts, ſuch as, *Oxen, Sheep, and the like; and was*, in fine, *a very rich Man, the other was Maſter of no more than* (h) *one Ew-lamb; which he brought up, and fed with his own Children, and lov'd it as his Daughter.*

The rich Man had a Stranger come to his Houſe, whom as he was bound in Hoſpitality and in Honour to entertain; but rather than treat him out of his own Store, he ſent and forced away the poor Man's only Lamb for the Stranger's Supper.

" *A Villain*, ſays the King, (i) *in* " *a Paſſion, to do a Thing ſo Baſe and* " *ſo Unjuſt! I would have him make* " *four-fold Satisfaction, and die for it* " *beſides.*"

Why then, replied Nathan *immediately, thou* (k) *art the Man, who*

(*h*) One Ew-lamb. The Poignancy of the parable began now to appear, *the rich Man*, we are told, *had exceeding many Flocks and Herds*, but the whole ſubſtance of the other was comprized in one little Ew-lamb. A ſimile this, which is moſt beautifully diſcriptive, and truly poetical; a Lamb is generally uſed as the Emblem of Innocence, deſignedly thrown in to awaken the King's Tenderneſs and Pity, from a Conſideration of the weak and defenceleſs Condition of a Female.

(*i*) In a Paſſion. This Anger of *David* ſhews the Humanity and Compaſſion of his Nature; and was extremely juſt againſt one who ſeemed to have no Pity or Regard to the little Property of another, whoſe Ew-lamb, ſo beloved by him, muſt be ſacrificed to the Power and repacious Will of this rich and over-bearing Man; but at the ſame Time it proves the Frailty of human Nature, ſo diſcerning of Faults committed by another, and ſo blind and forgetful of our own: though he had violently ſeized *Uriah*'s beloved Wife of his Boſom, his Ew-lamb, that was forgot.

How quick-ſighted our bleſſed Saviour intimates, our ſeeing into the *Mote of a Brother*'s *Eye*, and how dim, with Regard to the *Beam in our own Eye*.

(*k*) Thou art the Man. This Text of Scripture ſhews the Wiſdom and Modeſty, as well as courage of the Prophet; and is a moſt uſeful Leſſon to Miniſters, ſet apart to rebuke Vice, by *whoever* committed, and whether *in* or *out of Seaſon*; here was Honour and Reſpect paid to the Dignity and royal Character of *David*; he introduces his divine Meſſage and Remonſtrance by the foregoing ſtriking Parable.

He did not immediately and indecently tax him with his Crime, which, inſtead of this Softneſs of his, might have raiſed his Paſſion, enflamed and rouſed the natural Man, and eſpecially the Prince into Warmth, inſtead of Conviction; but when he had brought his Mind into a right Frame, and made fit to receive the Reproof properly, and as it was deſigned, he plainly and without Flattery, from this Parable, laid his Crime before him, which anſwered the End and brought him to Repentance.

Tho

deſerves ſuch Puniſhment, and out of thy own Mouth haſt pronounced Judgment upon thyſelf.

The Prophet, then gave him an Account of his Viſion, and of God's high Diſpleaſure againſt him, reminding him of his Ingratitude to that Providence that had conſtituted him King of Iſrael, *and given him the Command of all the Neighbouring Nations thereabouts; deliver'd him ſeveral Times out of* Saul's *Hands, &c.* Repreſenting to him the Iniquity of his Conduct; *that he who had ſo many lawful Wives allowed him, to take away, ſhould marry another Man's Wife, in Defiance of God and Man, and betray her Huſband to the Enemy, and to Death. The Prophet then predicting to him, that he ſhould live to ſee his Women raviſhed by one of his own Sons, and that Son enter into a Deſign upon the Life of his Father; and in a Word, that for this ſecret Sin of his, he ſhould be brought to open Shame and Puniſhment; concluding with this Preſage, that the Son of his unlawful Love ſhould be very ſhort-liv'd.*

This Denunciation of the Prophet ſtruck *David* with Terror and Confuſion, and drew from him a penitential Confeſſion with Tears, that he had ſinned againſt God.

David being a righteous Man, and (this one Thing excepted) one who before had never been Guilty of the Commiſſion of any unjuſt Action, God was pleaſed to accept of his true Repentance took him into his Favour again, and promiſed to ſecure him in the Enjoyment, both of his Kingdom, and of his Life.

The Prophet having thus executed the divine Command, returned to his own Habitation; but ſoon after his Departure, the Lord ſtruck the Child, that *Uriah*'s Wife bare unto *David*, with a grievous Sickneſs, which was ſo ſenſible an Affliction to the Father, that he took his Chamber upon it, and for ſeven Days together proſtrated himſelf upon the Ground in Sackcloth and Mourning; nor could he be perſuaded by his Servants to receive any Suſtenance; beſeeching Almighty God to ſpare the Child, having the greateſt Tenderneſs imaginable for the Mother. But his Prayers proved ineffectual; for upon the ſeventh Day the Child died. *(a)*

None of the Family durſt ſpeak a

Tho' *we* are not to *Propheſy in any Bethel or King's Court*, yet Reproofs, like every Thing elſe in the Miniſtry and Houſe of God, are to be done decently and in Order, with Meekneſs of Wiſdom, and Regard to Time, Place and Station.

(*a*) The Child Died. It has been asked, Why the Death of this Child ſhould be depreeated by *David* in the moſt ſolemn Manner, and as the greateſt Puniſhment, when, had it lived, it would have been a laſting Monument of the Guilt and Infamy of it Parents? But the beſt Way to account for this, is to aſcribe it to *David*'s exceſſive fondneſs for *Bathſheba*, which ſo ſtrongly attached him to every Offſpring of her's, and made him forget every thing in this Child, but that Motive of Endearment.

Beſides, it muſt be allowed that there is ſomething in human Nature, which prompts us to rate Things after a very unaccountable Manner, by eſtimating them, not according to

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Word of it to the King; for he, they thought, that was ſo given up to Sorrow, as to deny himſelf the moſt neceſſary Comforts and Refreſhments of Life, when the Child was only ſick, would afflict himſelf with a more intenſe and ſevere Abſtinence, if he ſhould know it to be dead.

David obſerved ſuch a Diſorder in the Countenances of his Family, that he took it for certain there was ſomething extraordinary in the Caſe, that they durſt not acquaint him with, which he concluded could be nothing elſe but the Death of the Child: and, upon examining one of his Servants about it, he found it ſo to be. The Child being dead, and all Mourning and Prayer therefore unneceſſary, *David* aroſe, waſhed himſelf, chang'd his Cloaths, and went directly to the Tabernacle to worſhip; commanding his Servants, after this, to ſet his Supper upon the Table.

His Kindred and Domeſticks were all in Admiration and Aſtoniſhment at a Change ſo unexpected; for while the Child was but dangerouſly ill, there was nothing but Paſſion and Extravagance; and now it was dead, the Father came to himſelf again. This was their opinion of the Caſe; but they had yet a Curioſity to know what might be the true Reaſon of it; wherein *David* was very free with them upon a decent Intimation of the Deſire they had to be better informed.

While the Child was living, ſaid he, *and not quite out of Hope of Recovery, I omitted no Opportunity of Application to God for its Life; but when I ſaw it was dead, it would have been a fooliſh Thing to torment myſelf any farther to no Manner of Purpoſe.*

The Prudence of this Reſolution was highly commended by all that had heard him.

Bathſheba, after this, in her due Time, according to the Courſe of Nature, brought *David* a Son; who, by the Direction of the Prophet *Nathan*, gave him the Name of *Solomon*. (*b*)

David's General, *Joab*, had by this Time ſo diſtreſſed the *Ammonites*,

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to their real Worth, but according to the Trouble and Expence, or even Diſtreſs they coſt us.

Nor ſhould it be forgot, that *David*'s exceſſive Mourning proceeded not ſo much from the Fear of loſing the Child, as from a deep Senſe of his Sin, and of the divine Diſpleaſure manifeſted in the Child's Sickneſs; and probably alſo, from a juſt Apprehenſion of the great Injury he had done to the Infant by his Sin, and which he thought himſelf bound in Juſtice, as far as he was able, to repair by inceſſant Prayer and Interceſſion, accompanied with Tokens of the moſt ſincere and unaffected Sorrow and Humiliation for his paſt Offences.

(*b*) *Solomon.* The Word *Solomon*, is properly derived from *Shalom*, which ſignifies Peace, intimating that his Reign ſhould be peaceable; but by God's Appointment the Prophet *Nathan* gave him the Name of *Jedidiah*, that is, the beloved of God.

The Scripture however, never calls him by any other Name than that of *Solomon*: for what Reaſon, indeed, is quite uncertain, unleſs we may hazard a Conjecture, that the People, being long harraſſed in War, during his Father's Reign, might perhaps be pleaſed with this Name rather than the other, to intimate their Hopes and longing Deſires of Peace.

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by cutting them off from all Manner of Proviſions, that they were almoſt reduced to the laſt Extremity of Hunger and Thirſt; for they had only one little Spring left them, which they were obliged to draw by ſhort Allowances, for fear of exhauſting, or looſing that too.

Joab therefore ſent *David* a particular Account of the State of the Siege, deſiring the Honour of his Preſence there, to put the laſt Hand himſelf to the Deſtruction of the City, as an Action worthy to be found upon Record in the Hiſtory of his other heroical Exploits.

David was ſo fully ſatisfied with the Wiſdom, Faith and Zeal of his General, that he put himſelf preſently at the Head of his Army, and marching to the Aſſault of *Rabbah*; took it by Storm, and gave the Pillage of it to the Soldiers, taking only for himſelf a golden Crown of the King's, of a Talent Weight, and a rich Sardonyx upon it, which he wore conſtantly upon his Head afterward for an Ornament: not to mention an infinite variety of other rich Booty that was found in the City.

The Inhabitants which remained in the City were ſubject to the moſt accute as well as abject Puniſhment, as were all the other Places belonging to the *Ammonites*, which did not acknowledge the King of *Iſrael*, as Sovereign.

But the Glories of this Conqueſt were ſoon ſullied by a melancholy Circumſtance that fell out in *David's* Family.

The King had a Daughter as yet a Virgin, and highly celebrated for the Endowments of her Mind, as well as the Beauty of her Perſon. Her Name was *Tamar*, and ſhe and *Abſalom* had one Mother.

Amnon, the eldeſt Son of *David*, fell deſperately in Love with her; and finding, that betwixt her own Modeſty, and the Watch ſhe had upon her, there was no Hope of ſucceeding, he pined away into a kind of languiſhing Conſumption.

Jonadab, his Friend and Kinſman, and a Perſon of good Senſe and Judgment, taking Notice of this Change in *Amnon*, and that he grew every Day worſe and worſe, went to him, and asked him, What he ailed? and in ſhort, if he was not in Love? for he had a Suſpicion of it.

Amnon, without any Difficulty, owned himſelf to have a violent Paſſion for his own Siſter. Upon this, the other immediately ſuggeſted to him a Method how he might compaſs his End.

Jonadab's fatal Advice was, for *Amnon* to pretend Sickneſs, and the firſt Time his Father came to viſit him, he requeſted, that he would ſend his Siſter to him: this was granted, and *Amnon* deſired to have ſome Cakes of his Siſter's making, for he could not eat any thing elſe. Therefore ſhe took the Flower, knealed it, raiſed and baked it, all in her Brother's Sight: and in Concluſion, offered him ſome to eat, which he would not ſo much as taſte, but called out to his Servants immediately to with-

draw, and let nobody come in to trouble him, for he would lay himſelf to reſt.

As ſoon as the Room was cleared of the Attendants, he deſired his Siſter to carry what ſhe had prepared for him, into an inner Chamber there, which ſhe did, and her Brother taking Advantage of that Privacy, laid hold of her: and by the utmoſt Importunity of a violent Paſſion, preſſed and courted her to the gratifying of his brutal Appetite.

The innocent Virgin, exclaiming all the while to him, *For Shame! for Shame!* not to offer ſo impious, and ſo ſcandalous an Action, as it would be to ſacrifice himſelf, and his whole Family, to the outward Rage of a luſtful Deſire.

Let me go, ſays ſhe, *for the Love of God, and keep your exorbitant Deſires within the Compaſs of Law, Honeſty and Religion; or if you cannot maſter them, try if you can get your Father's Good-will, and never think of extorting a kindneſs from me by Violence.*

But there was no reaſoning, ſhe found, with an impetuous, raging Paſſion. *Tamar* indeed hoped, for the preſent, to amuſe him with ſome diſtant Promiſe of Compliance. But all her Endeavours were vain, for Strength, enforced by a raging Paſſion, overcame every Obſtacle, and her Virtue fell a Victim to her Brother's inordinate Luſt.

No ſooner had he committed the Villiany, and quenched his criminal Flame, than his extravagant Love was degenerated into the contrary Extreme, of implacable Hatred; inſomuch that he urged her with Reproaches and ill Language, to depart his Chamber, and be gone.

What, ſaid ſhe, *now you have debauched me, am I to be expoſed too? and ſent away by Day-light with all this Confuſion and Horror upon me, to tell the World how barbarouſly you have uſed me? Nay, this Treatment in cold Blood is yet worſe, if worſe can be, even than the accurſ'd Act itſelf, under the Impotency of an ungovernable Paſſion to aleviate the Crime.*

But all Remonſtrance availed not, for *Amnon* determined on her Departure, commanded his Servants to turn her out of the Houſe.

Thus compelled, ſhe went into the Street, with (*c*) Aſhes on her Head, and her Veſt (ſuch as was then in Faſhion for Perſons of her Quality) diſordered and torn, and proceeded through the City; crying out, and complaining

(*c*) Aſhes on her Head. That this was the ancient Manner of expreſſing Grief and Concern for any Loſs or Calamity, is evident from that Paſſage of the Prophet concerning the People of *Tyre*: *They ſhall cry bitterly, caſt Dirt upon their Heads, and wallow themſelves in the Aſhes*, Ezek. xxvii. 30.

From the Behaviour of *Achilles*, upon the Death of *Patroclus*, as we have it in *Homer*:

Then ſordid Duſt upon his Head he caſt,
And with his Hands his manly Looks diſgrac'd.

And from what *Mezentius* did upon the Death of *Lauſus*, according to *Virgil*:

With ſordid Duſt defiles his Silver Hairs,
And to the Skies, his helpleſs Hands he rears.

Revenge

how ſhe had been abuſed and raviſhed.

Her Brother *Abſo'am* had the Fortune to meet her in this Diſtraction and Dreſs; and asking her what was the Matter? ſhe told him the whole Story of her Brother's, and the brutal Indignity that he offered her.

Abſalom informed her, in order to pacify her, that the Diſhonour was however not ſo great, conſidering it was the Act of her own Brother, which for the preſent ſubſided her Clamour. After which, ſhe lived for ſome Time ſingle in the Houſe of her Brother *Abſalom*.

When the News was carried to King *David*, he was infinitely troubled at it; but *Amnon* being his eldeſt, and his beloved Son, he was yet loth to put him to Extremities. *Abſalom*, however, bore him a mortal Grudge, and waited only a fair Opportunity for Revenge, (*d*)

Two Years after the Rape of *Tamar*, *Abſalom* having appointed a Sheep-ſheering at *Baal-Hazor*, a City in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, invited his Father and his Brothers to the Meeting. His Father excuſed himſelf, offering as a Plea, the Inconvenience and Expence that attended his Removal from Place to Place; ſo that *Abſa'om* deſired Leave only for his Brothers, which being obtained, he gave his Domeſtics this Order, That upon giving them the Sign, when *Amnon* ſhould be in his Cups, they ſhould fall upon him and kill him.

Abſolom's Stewards accordingly executed moſt punctually their Maſter's Command; for as ſoon as they obſerved *Amnon* waxed merry, and therefore not on his Guard, they fell upon him, and ſlew him on the Spot.

CHAP. VI.

Abſalom *flies after the Murder of his Brother.* Joab's *Invention to reſtore him to his Favour.* Abſolam *obtains Leave to go to* Hebron *on a perfidious Deſign.* David *quits his Reſidence at* Jeruſalem. *Divers Stratagems concerted to deprive him of his Crown and Dignity.* Abſalom *particularly ſeeks to obtain by Fraud his Father's Kingdom; is aſſiſted in his impious Proceedin by ſeveral falſe Courtiers.* David *receives News of his Son's Diſobedience and Rebellion. Engageth with him. Totally defeats him. He flies, and being found hanging by the Hair to a Bough, is ſlain by* Joab.

THE Fate of *Amnon* ſo terrified all the Brothers, that they rode precipately to acquaint their Father, aſſured that he had likewiſe a Deſign upon all their Lives.

In the Interim, comes a Fore-run-

(*d*) Revenge. As *Abſalom* neither threatned, nor expoſtulated, nor even took the leaſt Notice of what had paſſed *Amnon* lulled himſelf into a Belief, that *Abſalom* would not Trouble him; whereas he had greater reaſon to apprehend that he was meditating ſome terrible Revenge.

Geſtur.

ner to *David*, with News, that *Abſalom* had put all his Brothers to Death. It was ſo terrible a Surprize to *David*, to hear of the Loſs of ſo many of his Sons, and by the Hand of their own Brother, that he abandoned himſelf, to an inconſolable Deſparation; and without any further Enquiry, or waiting for a Confirmation of the Report, through a Wickedneſs almoſt incredible, he gave himſelf up to an inſupportable Anguiſh of Thought; tearing his Garments, and caſting himſelf proſtrate on the Ground, lamenting not only the murdered, but the Murderer himſelf.

But *Jonadab*, the Son of *Shimei*, *David's* Brother, deſired him to ruminate upon the Matter, with Temper and Moderation, aſſuring him that he could not believe the Report till further Confirmation, though it was reaſonable to expect that he might avenge himſelf of *Amnon*.

While they were in Diſcourſe, they heard the Trampling of Horſes, and the Hurry of People as approaching; and theſe were the King's Sons, who had made their Eſcape from the Feaſt at the Houſe of their Brother.

The Greeting of the Father and his Sons was not without Tears on both Sides; the Father ſurprized at the Sight of them living, whom he took to be dead: the Sons lamenting the Loſs of their Brother, and the Father deploring the barbarous Murder of a Son. So there was ſufficient Cauſe for Grief and Lamentation.

Abſalom, in the mean Time retired to *Geſhur*, (*e*) where he continued three Years in the Houſe of his Mother's Father, a Perſon of eminence in that Country.

David had by this Time a great Deſire to recall *Abſalom*, not to puniſh him, but to have him Home again; for the Severity of his Diſpleaſure was now well nigh over; and theſe charitable Inclinations were dextrouſly enough managed to *Abſalom's* Advantage, by the Friendſhip of *Joab*, who enjoyed the King's Confidence. In order to this End, he dealt with an ancient Woman, who was to put herſelf in Mourning, as a Perſon in great Diſtreſs, and as an humble Supplicant, to preſent the King with her Caſe to this Effect.

That two of her Sons in the Country had had an unhappy Quarrel, which grew to ſuch Animoſity, that they fought upon it, and one of them was killed.

Some of his Friends who was ſlain, demanded Juſtice upon him that had kil-

(*e*) *Geſhur*. In the Cauſe of wilful Murther, the Moſaic Laws runs thus, *That the Avenger of Blood ſhall ſlay the Murtherer; when he meeteth him he ſhall ſlay him*, Numb. xxxv. 21. From whence it follows, that it was not in any Man's Power to protect the wilful Murtherer, becauſe the Avenger of Blood, that is, the neareſt Relation of the Perſon murthered, might with impunity kill him, whenever he met him. As *Abſalom* therefore was obnoxious to this Law, his Life was every Moment in Danger: and as there were no Cities of Refuge in his own Country, that would, in this Caſe yield him any Protection, he was forced to flee out of the Kingdom to his Mother's Father.

led

led him. So she was to beg of his Majesty the Life of her Son, as the only Hope and Stay of her old Age.

She had no Prospect of Relief, but in his Majesty's Clemency; for her Son's Enemies were so malicious, that nothing else could satisfy them than the interposition of the King's Authority.

She performed her Part, and the King granted her Request; whereupon, with a dutiful Acknowledgment of the King's Grace and Favour to an ancient Woman, and the Mother of one only Child, entreated another Grant from his Royal Bounty.

Her Suit was, *That the King would in the first Place be pleased to pardon his own Son* Absalom; *for in beginning with a Compassion to him, it would be effectually the ratifying of her own Son's Case, in his own Family. Adding, It would be very hard, that for a Father to lose one Son by Misadventure, and to kill another himself.*

The King presently surmized that this was a Contrivance of *Joab's*; and upon discoursing with the Woman, found his Conjecture to be true. Upon this Discovery *David* called for *Joab*, and told him that he had gained his Point, and was now at Liberty to bring *Absalom* back again when he thought fit, for his Anger had subsided, and he had freely forgiven him.

Joab was very glad to hear it, did Reverence to the King, hastened away to *Geshur*, and brought *Absalom* back with him to *Jerusalem*. The King being told of his coming, sent him Word, that Matters were not as yet in so good a Disposition as that it would be proper for him to appear in his Presence; so that *Absalom* kept himself out of the King's Sight, within his own Walls, and with his private Family. He had gone thorough much Care and Trouble; and his Entertainment of late had been rather coarse than delicate; in short he had lived in a Manner not suitable to the Dignity of a Prince of the Blood. But he still retained the Beauty and Gracefulness of his Person to the highest Degree of Perfection. He cut his Hair every twelve Months; in the Compass of which Time, it grew up to the Weight of two Hundred Shekels; that is about thirty three Ounces.

In this obscure State and Conditon he lived about two Years in *Jerusalem*, and had Children; three Sons and one Daughter, who proved to be a Miracle of a Beauty. She was married afterward to *Rehoboam* the Son of *Solomon*; and had a Son by him whose Name was *Abia*.

Absalom finding himself uneasy under his present Circumstances, sent to *Joab* to use his Interest with his Father towards regaining him Admission into his Royal Presence; and, in short, towards procuring him a thorough and absolute Reconciliation. He waited a while for an Answer; but receiving no Satisfaction upon his Message, sent some of his People to a neighbouring Field of *Joab's*, to burn his Corn as it stood there upon the Ground.

Joab came to him, and expostulating the Matter with him, asked him

what he had ever done to deſerve ſuch unkind Treatment at his Hands? *Why*, Abſalom *replied, I had no Way of getting you to me but that. I wrote to you about interceding for me to my Father, and you have done nothing in it I perceive, Pray will you try if you can pacify him; for at this Rate, if he goes on ſtill to be inexorable, I am in a worſe Condition at Home than I was in my Baniſhment.*

Joab took pity of him upon this Diſcourſe and plied the King ſo artfully and ſo effectually on his Behalf, that his Heart relented, and *Abſalom* was immediately ſent for to attend his Father. He caſt himſelf at the King's Feet upon his firſt Entrance into the Room, and begged Pardon for all his Miſdoings, whereupon *David* with his right Hand took him up again, with the Aſſurance of a ſolemn Promiſe, that all old Offences ſhould be for ever buried in Oblivion.

Abſalom being re-eſtabliſhed in the good Opinion and Eſteem of his Father, in a ſhort Time furniſhed himſelf with a ſplendid Equipage, with Chariots and Horſes; a numerous Train and Retinue of Servants, and no leſs than fifty Men to attend him as his Body Guard. He was the firſt Man ſtill at the King's Levee; not forgetting, on the other Hand, to take all Occaſions alſo to ingratiate himſelf with the Multitude, and to keep fair Report with the People. If any Man had Cauſe to be heard, and came for Juſtice, he would addreſs him in theſe familiar Terms, *Friend, what is thy Name? What Countryman? What Buſineſs? Can I do thee any Good?* and the like.

When he found People out of Humour, and diſſatisfied with a croſs Verdict, or a hard Judgment, (as they pretended;) *Why this it is, he would ſay, the King has evil Counſellors about him. Nay, and God help him, miſtakes the Point himſelf ſometimes, as well as another. Well! and ſo God ſpeed ye my Friends; if I had been in ſomebody's Place, Things ſhould never have gone at this Rate.* This was his Method of ſtealing the Affections of the People, and moulding them for his Deſign; and the Policy proved too effectual.

Having thus worked himſelf into the Favour of the People, and gained over to his Intereſt a very numerous and powerful Party of zealous Adherents, he began ambitiouſly to aſpire after his Father's Crown, and to promote his impious Deſigns, ſolicited of *David* Permiſſion to go to *Hebron*, in order to perform a ſolemn Vow that he had made during the Courſe of his Exile. Having obtained his Requeſt, he took a prodigious Multitude; ſome whom he invited, and others that came voluntarily with him. Among the reſt was *Ahithophel* the *Gilonite*, *David*'s prime Miniſter, with two hundred Men of *Jeruſalem*, who came thither to ſacrifice, without the leaſt Imagination of a Conſpiracy. At length however, the Plot took, and *Abſalom*, by the common Voice of the People, was proclaimed King.

The News of ſuch ungrateful Behaviour in his Son, ſtruck the King with

with Surprize and Conſternation; he was aſtoniſhed to think of a rebellious Uſurpation, from a Wretch that could ſo ſoon forget his own late Guilt, and his Father's Mercy, as to revolt into a ſecond Apoſtacy, ſo much more flagitious than the former; for he was firſt to lay violent Hands upon his Father's Kingdom, though he himſelf knew it to be the ſpecial Gift of God. And after that, to practice upon his very Life too.

David being in this Streight, bethought himſelf of paſſing the River *Jordan* into ſome Place more ſecure; and therefore with the Advice of ſome of his intimate Friends, what Courſe to take in this ſedicious Juncture, he reſolved to leave the Care of his Palace to ten of his Concubines, quit *Jeruſalem*, and commit the Iſſue to God.

He accordingly departed with great Multitudes of People that carefully adhered to him, and joined themſelves in his Train, eſpecially his own ſix hundred Friends, that kept ſo cloſe to him when he was hunted up and down by *Saul*, from one hiding-place to another.

The High Prieſts, *Abiathar* and *Zadoc*, and all the Levites there, were for going with him, and taking the Ark along with them; but upon very good Reaſons he prevailed with them to ſtay, telling them, That God's Providence was ſufficient for his Preſervation, without any Neceſſity of the Holy Ark being upon the Place.

His laſt Charge to them was, to ſecure ſome private Method of Conveyance, whereby to ſend him ſpeedy Intelligence of whatever might occur during his Abſence, that related to his moſt important Concern; and they acquitted themſelves of that Commiſſion with great Faith and Induſtry; for *Ahimaaz*, the Son of *Zadoc*, and *Jonathan*, the Son of *Abiathar*, *Ittai*, the *Gittite*, had ſo great a Zeal for his own Perſonal Duty, and the Service of his Maſter, that he forced himſelf along with him, though he preſſed him earneſtly againſt it.

While the King and his Adherents were aſcending Mount *Olivet* barefooted, and with every Token of Humiliation, Tears filled the general Eye. He received Information that *Ahithophel* had deſerted his Cauſe, and revolted to *Abſalom*.

This proving to *David* one of the moſt affecting Circumſtances that had befallen him. He prayed to God to infatuate him, and to turn his Wiſdom into Fooliſhneſs. He was a clear-ſighted Man, and of great Penetration, and there was nothing *David* ſo much dreaded, as the Policy of his Councils.

When he had gained the Mountain Top, he looked back upon the City, ſhedding Tears, end uttering Ejaculations, as one that was now taking his laſt Leave of his Government.

In this State of Perplexity, he caſually met his tried Friend and faithful Subject *Huſhai*, with his Garments torn, and Aſhes upon his Head, lamenting the tranſitory State of all Things below the Sun.

David bad him be of good cheer, and

and bare the preſent Calamity with Reſignation and Patience; and urged him finally, with great Earneſtneſs, to go back again to *Jeruſalem*, where he might behave himſelf like one of *Abſalom*'s Party; pry into his Counſels and Deſigns, and by thwarting *Ahithophel*'s Meaſures, do his Maſter infinitely better Service, than by ſtaying with him.

Huſhai yielded to his Perſuaſions; and ſo taking his Leave of *David*, returned to *Jeruſalem*, *Abſalom* himſelf coming thither not long after.

David in the mean while paſſing forward, met with *Ziba*, the Servant of *Mephiboſheth*, to whom he had committed the Management of the Eſtate he had beſtowed upon the Son of his dear Friend *Jonathan*. He was driving two Aſſes before him, and offered *David* and his Men to take what they pleaſed of what he had, if there was any thing they liked.

The Queſtion was put to *Ziba* upon this Occaſion, *What was become of his Maſter?* He anſwered, *He left him at* Jeruſalem, *in hopes that upon the preſent diſtracted State of Affairs, the People, in Honour to the Memory of his Father* Saul, *might be prevailed upon to chuſe him King.*

David, juſtly incenſed at ſo flagrant an Inſtance of Ingratitude, that he reſumed his Grant of the Lands made to *Mephiboſheth*, and beſtowed them on *Ziba*, as the more deſerving Perſon of the two.

This was a Token of Favour and Bounty very acceptable to *Ziba*.

As the King proceeded in his March, and approached *Bahurim*, there came out of that Place a Kinſman of *Saul*'s whoſe Name was *Shimei*, the Son of *Gera*, and aſſaulted him with Curſes and with Stones, and the more *David*'s Friends took his Part on the one Side, the more foul and ſcandalous were the Reproaches of *Shimei* on the other.

He reviled *David* with being a Delighter in Blood, and the Cauſe of all their Miſeries, and bad him depart out of the Country, like an inſolent, execrable Wretch; giving God Thanks for that Retaliation upon him, by his Son, for the Indignities that he had formerly put upon his Lord and Father.

Theſe rude and barbarous Outrages, provoked the Indignation of all that heard them; and *Abiſhai* had certainly killed him for it, if *David* had not interpoſed, and prevented it, by thus addreſſing him.

Pray hold your Hand, and do not add Miſchief to Miſchief. Things are bad enough already, and do not make them worſe. I look upon the Clamours of this Clown, as I do upon the Bawling of a mad Dog, that God had let looſe upon me; and his holy Will be done.

Why ſhou'd you wonder at the unmannerly Revilings of a Scoundrel, when at the ſame Time I am worſe treated by my own ungracious Son.

But there is a merciful God above, who, in the End, will deliver the Innocent out of the Hands of the Oppreſſors, and give us Victory over all our Enemies; wherefore in the Name, and under the Protection of that God, let us proceed forward on our Journey.

As

As *David* advanced cooly, on one Side of the Mountain, *Shimei* ran railing and curſing over-againſt him on the other.

After a long and wearisome March, they arrived at length at the Bank of the River *Jordan*, where *David* muſtered and refreſhed his Troops.

Abſalom, and his great Counſellor *Ahithophel*, were by this Time come to *Jeruſalem*, where they were received with Shouts and Acclamations by a vaſt Concourſe of People; and among the reſt, by *David's* Friend *Huſhai*, who together with the People exclaimed, God ſave the King, wiſhing him a long and happy Reign.

Abſalom, upon this Encounter, aſked *Huſhai*, how it came to paſs, that he who was eſteemed ſo eminent and faithful a Servant to his Father, ſhould now deſert his former Maſter, and come over to him?

Huſhai anſwered him diſcreetly, thus, *There is no contending with the Will of God, and the Conſent of the People; and ſo long as you have them on your Side, you may be ſure of my Fidelity.*

It is from God that you have received your Kingdom; and if you can think me worthy of a Place in the Number of thoſe you will vouchſafe to own, you ſhall find me as true to you, as ever I was to your Father.

No Man is to account the preſent State of Things grievous, ſo long as the Government continues in the ſame Line, and a Son of the ſame Family ſucceeds to the Throne.

These Words of *Haſhai* to *Abſalom* put an End to all Jealouſies.

The moſt material Buſineſs now to be purſued was, to determine on the next Step, and *Ahithophel* was called in, to adviſe about it. The Counſel he gave was, for *Abſalom* to go in and lie with all his Father's Concubines; enforcing his Advice by obſerving, *This would fix the People, and make them ſo much the bolder and firmer to the preſent State, when they ſhould ſee the Breach advanced beyond all poſſibility of Reconciliation; for as Matters now ſtand, People would be apt to ſay, Why the Father and the Son may come to an Agreement for ought we know; and if they ſhould chance to adjuſt Differences in the Concluſion, Where are we? ſo that it would be dangerous to declare under ſuch Uncertainty.*

Abſalom, in ſhort, took *Ahithophel's* Counſel, and commanded his Servants to erect him a Tent in the Palace, where he lay with his Father's Concubines, in the Sight of the People.

This was according to what the Prophet *Nathan* foretold would befall *David*.

Having proceeded agreeable to *Ahithophel's* Plan; the next Point under Conſideration was, how they ſhould proceed in the Proſecution of the War?

His Anſwer was this, *That if they would but put him at the Head of twelve thouſand choſen Men, he would undertake therewith to deſtroy* David, *and ſecure the public Peace to the People, and the Government to* Abſalom *both at one Stroke.*

Abſalom, was much of *Ahithophel*'s Opinion; but willing however to have *Huſhai*'s alſo, he demanded his Advice upon the Caſe.

Huſhai, that was *David*'s true Friend, and ever ſo reputed, finding the Advice to be ſhrewd and dangerous, did what he could to divert *Abſalom* from it, by giving his Judgment another Way, after this Manner,

Sir, I need not tell you that your Father is a valiant Man, and that he hath a great many brave Men about him, with whom, in all Encounters he hath ever come off victorious.

You know him to be a Soldier too, and a Man of Stratagem, as well as of Courage. He will moſt infallibly have Advice of our Approach; and in ſome Valley, Wood, or behind ſome Rock, perhaps, lie ready to betray us into an Ambuſh. Or ſuppoſe we ſhould attempt to engage them, they will order the Matter ſo as to manage their Retreat by little and little, till they have drawn us into the Snare, when David's *whole Body will fall upon us before we know where we are.*

Now I ſubmit myſelf to your Judgment, betwixt the Conſternation it will cauſe on the one Hand, and the Incouragement it will give on the other, What a Confuſion this Way of proceeding will create among us?

And now you have heard both Opinions, you may follow either Ahithophel's *or mine, which appears moſt reaſonable.*

Having given thus far what was not to be done, he craved Leave to obſerve what he thought adviſable under theſe Circumſtances to be done.

Let the whole Nation of the Iſraelites *be ſummoned to appear, with all their Troops, at ſome certain Time and Place, to make War againſt* David. *And when they are met, do you yourſelf* (addreſſing himſelf to *Abſalom*) *take the Command of the whole into your own Hand, without truſting to Deputies. When this is done,* David *muſt either expoſe himſelf in the plain Field, or fly to ſome ſtrong Holds, or Walled Towns.*

If he keeps the Plain, his Forces are ſo few and inconſiderable, compared to the many Thouſand in Iſrael, *wholly devoted to your Intereſt, who will value themſelves upon an Opportunity being offered them to exert their Zeal in ſerving their Prince and Country, that your Power and Strength being hereby ſo much ſuperior to his, you are ſure of obtaining an eaſy Conqueſt over him.*

Or if he ſhall go the other Way to Work, of hiding and ſkulking up and down, to keep upon the Defenſive, there are twenty Ways, by mining, battering, ſtarving, and the like, that will certainly reduce him.

This Advice was generally applauded, inſomuch that *Abſalom* preferred it to the Counſel of *Ahithophel*, and the Event proved that the Interpoſing Hand of an All-wiſe Providence had great Concern in it.

Huſhai having brought Matters to this Iſſue, haſtened with all poſſible Speed to the High-Prieſts *Zadock* and *Abiathar*; with an Account of what had paſſed at the Council betwixt *Ahithophel* and himſelf, and how things were

were carried; desiring them to dispatch an Express immediately to *David*, with a Caution, by all Means to pass the River *Jordan* that very Night, for if his Son should either get Intelligence where he was, or change his Mind, he might fall in upon him before he could get over.

The High-Priests had lodged their Sons, for the Sake of Convenience, out of the Town, as well as provided a trusty Maid Servant, to carry them the Intelligence, which they were to transmit forthwith to *David*.

Upon the Receipt of this Information they made what haste they could with it, as became dutiful and faithful Servants. But by the Time they were advanced about a quarter of a Mile upon their Way, they were discovered by certain Horsemen; and *Absalom* having Notice of it, gave Order immediately for the taking of them up.

The Messengers were quickly aware of their Danger, and so turned out of the Way towards *Bahurim*, a small Village near *Jerusalem*; where they met with a Woman who was so charitable as to conceal them, by letting them down into a Well, and throwing some Skins of Beasts over the Mouth of it.

Although they were concealed with much Art and Expedition, the Pursuers came up to the House, and examined the Woman very strictly, whether she had seen any such Men or not. She acknowledged that two such Men drank at the Gate just before and then went their Way, assuring them moreover, that if they made haste after them they might easily be overtaken.

When they had searched up and down a long Time after them to no Purpose, they returned to their Quarters with their Labour for their Pains.

As soon as the Woman saw that all was safe, and the Coast clear, she drew the young Men out of the Well, and they proceeded on their Journey time enough to give *David* a seasonable Account of *Absalom*'s Design. It was late before they got thither, but *David* however got his People over the River the same Night.

Ahithophel was much piqued, that *Absalom* should reject his Counsel, and at the same Time embrace *Hushai*'s; so that he mounted his Ass, and went Home to *Galmon*, where he called his Family together, and told them the Advice he had given *Absalom*, but that he would not follow it; and that in a short Time, that Refusal would be his Ruin; for *David* would certainly get the better of him, and soon after recover his Kingdom.

This Conduct was followed by this Declaration, *Now, it is more honourable for me, to die with Resolution like a Man of Honour, than to wait sneaking till* David *returns, and then to be put to Death at last for the Services I have done the Son against the Father.*

Having thus spoken, he withdrew into a private Apartment in his House

Houſe, (agitated with (*m*) Grief,) and hanged himſelf. Conſcious of his unjuſt and wicked Behaviour in eſpouſing the impious Claim of a rebellious Son againſt the equitable Government of a pious and indulgent Father.

David having now paſſed the River *Jordan*, came to *Mahanaim*,* the faireſt and ſtrongeſt City in that Tract of Land; where he was treated by the principal Perſons of the whole Country with the higheſt Inſtances of Generoſity and Good-will, partly out of Humanity, with Regard to the Neceſſities of his preſent Condition, and partly out of Reverence in the Memory of his former State.

There was *Siphar*, a Prince of *Ammon*; *Barzillai* and *Machir*, two principal Men of *Gilead*, &c. Theſe generous Perſons took ſuch Care of *David*, and his People, and provided for them all that could poſſibly miniſter to their Comfort and Refreſhment, after an anxious State of Mind and toilſome Adventure.

Abſalom in the mean Time had paſſed the River with a mighty Army againſt his Father, and encamped not far from *Mahanaim*, a Town of *Gilead*, having made his Kinſman, *Amaſa*, General, in the Place of *Joab*. Amaſa, being the Son of *Itha* by *Abigail*. Now *Abagail*, and *Zeruiah*, the Mother of *Joab*, were Siſters.

King *David* having reviewed his Forces, found he muſtered no more than four thouſand ſtrong; but notwithſtanding the Smallneſs of his Number, he determined, by the Strength and Favour of the Almighty, to attack his inſolent and impious Son eſteeming ſuch Reſolution preferable to a lame Inactivity, that might furniſh him with an Opportunity of making an Aſſualt.

Thus reſolved, he appointed his Officers their reſpective Departments, and divided the little Body of his Army into three Parts. *Joab* had the firſt Diviſion; *Abiſhai*, the ſecond; and his old Frend *Ittai* the *Gittite*, the third.

David would have gone himſelf in Perſon; but his Friends, for very good Reaſons, oppoſed it: for, ſaid they, *Should we be beaten, and you yourſelf in the Field, the whole Cauſe would be loſt without any Reſource.*

But otherwiſe, if one Diviſion ſhould have the ill-hap to be worſted, the reſt might repair to himſelf, and be impowered thereby to re-inforce themſelves to make another Sally on the Enemy.

(*m*) Grief. Some of the moſt learned *Jewiſh* Doctors affirm, that *Aoithophel* did not hang himſelf, but that he was ſtifled with Grief: And it ſeems, that the *Septuagint* did not think that the original Word ſignified any Thing elſe, ſince they tranſlate it by the ſame Word here, 2 *Sam.* 17. 23. which St. *Matthew* xxvii. 5. make uſe of in Speaking of the Death of *Judas*, Beſides, all that *Salmaſius* has collected from the *Greek* Authors, to prove, that the *Greek* Word *Apegxato* ſignifies to die of Grief, as ſeveral Men have ſhewn.

* *Mahanaim.* This was a City in the Tribe of *Gad*, built in the Place where *Jacob* was met by the Angels of God in his Return from *Laban*.

Ephraim

Beſide, the King's not being upon the Spot, would poſſeſs the Enemy with an Apprehenſion, that he had another Body of Troops in reſerve.

This Motion was carried, and the King was prevail'd upon to ſtay at *Mahanaim*, *David* then abjur'd his Friends by all the Rites of Honour, Gratitude, and Conſcience, to acquit themſelves in their Duty; and in caſe God ſhould give them a Victory, to ſpare the Life of the young Man; for he durſt not truſt himſelf with his own Life after the Death of *Abſalom*. *David*'s Addreſs was follow'd with a Thouſand Bleſſings and good Wiſhes; and then he diſpatched them to the Army.

When *Abſalom* ſaw that *Joab* had drawn up his Diviſion upon a plain, with the Wood of * *Ephraim* at his Back, he diſpos'd of his own Troops likewiſe into the ſame Form over againſt the other. The Engagement ſoon commenced, and there was great Bravery on both Sides. One Part contending for the Recovery of what *David* had loſt, and the other for the Defence and Maintenance of what *Abſalom* had got, they appeared to Fight with equal Courage and Reſolution, being equally intent on carrying their Point. *Abſalom*'s Men fought ſometime upon a Point of Honour, and to avoid the Infamy of being worſted by ſo inconſiderable a Party. *David*'s Men on the other Hand, for the Glory of routing ſo many Thouſands of the Enemy upon ſuch a Diſproportion.

In the Concluſion, *David*'s Veterans behaved bravely, and like themſelves; for they broke the Enemy's Order, and put them to a total Rout, getting the Chace of them over Woods, Mountains and Craggs, witherſoever they fled; ſome they kill'd; ſome they took; and more were loſt in the Purſuit than in the Battle. Near Twenty Thouſand Men were reputed to be ſlain in that Day's Action.

Now *Abſalom* was ſo remarkable both for his Beauty, and his Stature, that he was every Body's Mark; ſo that for fear of being taken Alive, he mounted the fleeteſt Mule he could procure, and fled away as faſt as poſſible. By the Celerity of the Mule's Courſe, the Force of the Wind blew up his Hair, ſo that it catch'd hold on the rugged Bough of a Tree; and the Mule running forward from under him, left him ſuſpended in the Air, and continued her Speed, as if ſhe had her rider ſtill upon her Back. One of *David*'s Soldiers ſaw this, and carryed the Tidings thereof to *Joab*, who bad him go quickly, and diſpatch him, and he ſhould have fifty Shekels of Silver for his Pains. But the Soldiers bravely replied, I would not do ſuch a Thing to the Son of my Lord and Maſter for two

* *Ephraim*. So called here, becauſe, as ſome think, the *Ephraimites* drove their Cattle over *Jordan*, to feed them in the Wood. But it moſt probably had this Name from the great Slaughter of the *Ephraimites* by *Jephthah*.

Stones

Thouſand: eſpecially conſidering the Charge the King gave in your hearing, not to touch the Life of the young Man.

Joab hereupon commanded him to conduct him to the Place where he ſaw him hanging; whither when he came he pierced him through the Heart with his Javelin.

His Armour-bearer that were then preſent, took down the Body from the Tree, and caſt it into a deep Pit, piling a great Heap of (*f*) Stones upon it, in the Form of a Sepulchre. This being done, *Joab* ſounded a Retreat to take his Men off from the Chace, and ſave the Effuſion of more Blood in a civil War.

Abſalom had already erected a Marble Column, with an Inſcription upon it, in a Place call'd the King's Valley, about two Furlongs from Jeruſalem, which he called by the Name of the Hand of *Abſalom*, to perpetuate his Memory, as he ſaid, even if he ſhould leave no Children behind him.

He had three Sons, and one Daughter, who was married to *Rehoboam* the Son of *Solomon*, by whom he had *Abijah*, his immediate Succeſſor.

(*f*) Stone upon it. The Juſtice of God is very obſervable in bringing *Abſalom* to ſo condign a Puniſhment: For, in the firſt Place, he was hanged, as it were, and this was by the Law declared to be an accurſed Death, *Deut.* xxi. 23. And afterwards he was in ſome Meaſure *ſtoned*, which by the ſame Law, was the Particular Kind of Death preſcribed for a ſtubborn and rebellious Son.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

David *lamenteth* Abſalom. *Pardons* Shimei. Sheba *endeavours to prejudice the Minds of the People againſt* David. Joab *treacherouſly ſlays* Amaſa, *who had been ſent againſt* Sheba *by* David. *The City is ſaved by the Council of a wiſe Woman. A Famine inflicted on the* Iſraelites *for their former Breach of Faith with the* Gibeonites. David *defeats the* Philiſtines. *Is well nigh ſlain by them. Reſcued by* Abiſhai. *Encounters in various Battles againſt the* Philiſtines *with Succeſs.* David's *Champions. The People puniſhed for* David's *numbering them. He is pardoned on Repentance. The Peſtilence ſtopped.* David *lays a Plan for Building a ſolemn Temple.*

THE Adherents of *Abſalom*, having loſt their preſumptuous Leader, became intimidated, and privately ſtole away to their reſpective Places of Abode. *Ahimaaz* the Son of *Zadok* the high Prieſt then applied to *Joab* for Permiſſion to go and acquaint the King with the News of the Victory obtained over his Enemies.

Joab gave him this Anſwer, that it would not look well for him who had been always heretofore the Meſſenger of good News to the King, to be now the firſt Man to tell him of his Son's Death: and then called to *Cuſhi*, ſent him on the Errand, and ordered him to tell the King what he himſelf had ſeen. *Ahimaaz* intreated *Joab* a ſecond Time, to let him carry the Tidings only of the Victory, but not of the Death of *Abſalom*.

Joab upon this Importunity gave him Leave; and he knowing the neareſt Way better than the other, got thither before him. *David* was at this Time ſitting at the Gate, with longing Expectation to know the Event of the Battle, when a Scout brought him Word, that he ſaw

(g) one running that Way, but he was too far off to diſcern who it was.

The King looked upon it as a good Omen, and the Scout immediately upon this told the King that he diſcovered another, which gave him ſtill more Hope than before.

The Meſſenger being now come within Diſtance, was found to be *Ahimaaz*, the Son of *Zadock* the High-prieſt, who came firſt. This encouraged the King, who exclaimed, *This is the Man that moſt certainly brings me good Tidings.* The Words were hardly uttered; when *Ahimaaz* caſt himſelf at *David*'s Feet to do him Reverence, and asked him, *What News from the Army!* he replied, great Succeſs and Victory.

David then aſked him, *What was become of* Abſalom?

Ahimaaz anſwered, that as ſoon as ever he ſaw the Enemy routed, he came away with the Intelligence; but that he heard a mighty Clamour and Shouting all the while, upon the Purſuit of *Abſalom*; and *Joab* ſent him away in ſuch Haſte, that his Orders were only to carry the News of the Victory, without any mention of *Abſalom*. By this Time *Cuſhi* was at the King's Feet, with the Tidings of a Victory; and the King putting the ſame Queſtion to him as to the other, viz. What was become of *Abſalom*? *May it be,* ſays Cuſhi, *with all the Enemies of my Lord the King as it is with* Abſalom. Theſe Words turned a Day of Joy and Triumph into a Day of Mourning. It prov'd ſo to the King, for the Loſs of *Abſalom*; and to the People alſo; for *David* withdrew himſelf upon it out of Sight, to the Top of one of the higheſt Turrets about the City, beating his Breaſt, and tearing his Hair, with Cries and Exclamations, *Ah my ſon* Abſalom, *my Son* Abſalom, *Oh that I myſelf could have but died with thee, my Son!* *David* was by Nature extremely fond and tender of all his Children, but his Love to *Abſalom* was peculiar, and in a more intenſe Degree than to any of the Reſt.

As the King had diſcovered theſe Tokens of Grief, *Joab*, and his victorious Army were diſcouraged from entering the Town in a joyous and triumphant Manner; and therefore when they approached, hanged down their Heads, aſſumed dejected Countenances, and appeared more like Men conquered, than Conquerors.

David, continued ſo long in this abandon'd Dejection, that *Joab*, without Ceremony, broke in upon him in the very Agony of his Paſſion, reaſoning and expoſtulating with him in this Manner.

Sir, do you know what you do? are you aware of the Diſhonour you bring upon yourſelf by this wilful and effeminate Lamentation? It makes you look as if you hated your Friends, that have ſaved your Life at the Hazard of their

(g) One. This was a Token that the Meſſenger brough good Tidings, and his Party were employed in Purſuit of the Enemy; for if his Party had been worſted, thoſe that fled would have come in Crowds to the City for Refuge.

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own; nay, for yourself and your Family too; and at the same time cherished a Kindness even for those of your Enemies, which divine Justice hath taken away in your Favour, by the Stroke of a most righteous Vengeance, If Absalom *had carried the Day, and settled himself in his Usurpation, who would have bemoaned, either your Fate or ours? For we have most certainly been cut to Pieces, every living Soul: nay, you yourself, and your Children, would have fallen the first Victim to their Cruelty; then your Enemies would have rejoiced and gloried in your Ruin, and it would have been Death for any man to have but so much as pitied us. Does not your Conscience as well as your Honour check you for this unmanly Tenderness, for the Memory of so implacable an Enemy. He was your Son, 'tis true, but a most ungracious one; and you cannot be just to God's Providence, without acknowledging the Blessing of his being taken away. Assume then a cheerful Countenance, shew yourself to your People, and tell them, that it is to their Loyalty and Bravery,* (under God) *that you are indebted for the Honour of this Day; for if you go on as you have begun, I will infallably cause your Kingdom and your Army to reject you, and place another on the Throne; and then you will find a more real and sensible Cause for such grievious Affliction.*

The Conduct of *Joab* though bold and resolute, reduced *David* to some Degree of Reason, insomuch that he began once more to direct his Attention to Business of State and the Concerns of the People committed to his Care, shewing himself in Publick as usual, and assuming a more placid and satisfied Aspect. This Change of Humour wrought so effectually upon the People, that they came in Multitudes from all Parts to pay him their Reverence.

The Face of things being thus changed, *Absalom*'s Men that fled from the late Battle, and were got Home again, sent Messengers up and down, from Place to Place, to remind their Friends of the infinite Obligations they lay under to *David* upon all Accounts, and particularly for the Toils and Hazards he had undergone in his own Person, for the Vindication of their Liberty; how ungratefully they had behav'd themselves in their Revolt, and that they had nothing more to do now, than to lay themselves at his Feet; beg his Pardon, and beseech him once again to receive them into his Care and Protection, as formerly; especially as the Person was now no more whom they had most unjustly and injuriously set up in his Stead. The King had Addresses of this Kind sent him in Abundance, which he still communicated by Letters to the High-priest *Zadock* and *Abiathar*, with certain Hints, how they were to manage the Heads of the Tribe of *Judah* toward his Restoration. They insinuated accordingly, how shameful it would be for them to stand looking on, and let others go before them, in doing a common right to a Prince so generous, and of their own Tribe and Extraction.

This Way of proceeding created

an Emulation among them, who ſhould be foremoſt.

They were likewiſe to expoſtulate on the Cauſe with *Amaſa*, the Enemy's General, wherefore he himſelf, the Nephew of *David*, by his own Siſter, ſhould not diſpoſe the Army to a Senſe of their Duty, and the reſtoring of the Government to the right Owner.

They told *Amaſa*, That for what was paſt, he might be ſure of his Pardon; and that they doubted not but he might have the ſame Command under *David* that he had under *Abſalom*.

In this Manner the High-Prieſts proceeded towards the Heads of each Tribe, and by this Means brought over *Amaſa* to the Intereſt of *David*.

The Tribe of *Juda* were the firſt that ſent their Commiſſioners to invite the King back to the Exerciſe of his Government, and betwixt the Influence of this Example, and the Credit of *Amaſa* they were all to attend, and received the King at *Jeruſalem*.

The Tribe of *Judah* were remarkably the forwardeſt of the whole Body, and the moſt officious in their Reſpects; for they went to the very Bank of the River *Jordan* to meet him.

There was *Shimei*, the Son of *Gera*, at the Head of a thouſand *Benjamites*. There was alſo *Ziba*, *Saul*'s Freeman, and his fifteen Children, and twenty Servants: who together with the Tribe of *Judah*, laid a Bridge over the River, for the more commodious Paſſage of *David* and his Troops.

Upon his coming to the River, the Tribe of *Judah*, were the firſt that ſaluted him; and *Shimei* advancing to the Bridge, threw himſelf at *David*'s Feet, begging his Pardon for the Indignities he had put upon him; beſeeching him to paſs it all over, and that it might never riſe in Judgment againſt him when he ſhould be re-inſtated in his Kingdom. Deſiring moreover, that his early Repentence and return to his Allegience might atone for his paſt Faults.

Shimei, on this Application, was thus accoſted, by *Abiſhai*, *Joab*'s Brother, *And do you think to come off ſo eaſily; you that could have the Face to blaſpheme the King that God had ſet over you at ſo unpardonable a Rate?*

But *David* checked his intemperate Zeal, with theſe words, *Be Silent, you Sons of* Zeruiah; *without blowing the Coal, and ſtiring up new Broils; for I would have you look upon this as the firſt Day of my Reign; and take Notice of what I do now declare upon my Oath.*

I do freely forgive all the World, and I do promiſe that no Perſon ſhall ſuffer for any thing done againſt me, or againſt any body elſe for my Sake, of what Kind or Quality ſoever; ſo that you may ſet your Heart at reſt, Shemei *your Life is no Danger.*

Upon this Aſſurance he made his Reverence and went his Way.

After him came *Mephiboſheth*, *Saul*'s Grandſon, with as forlorn and miſerable

rable an Aſpect as can be conceived; for upon the King's being forced away from the Palace, this good Man reckoning the King's Calamity as his own, bound himſelf by a Vow, never to cut his Hair, (*b*) waſh his Feet, or change his Cloaths, till it might pleaſe God to reſtore him.

Ziba took this Opportunity of traducing his Maſter to the King; for upon *David*'s aſking him how he came to leave him, when he was under Perſecution, he laid the Fault upon *Ziba*, for not obeying his Orders; but on the contrary, treating him like a Slave, notwithſtanding the expreſs charge he had given him to have all Neceſſaries in Readineſs for his Journey.

Mephiboſheth thus repreſented the true State of the Caſe, *If I had the Uſe of my Legs, as other People have, this ſhould not have hindered me neither.*

Nay, farther Adding, *and which is more, he has not only diſappointed me in the Exerciſe of my Duty, but I perceive he has done me ſpiteful Offices, and aſperſed my Character to yourſelf, but you are ſo juſt, and ſo great a Lover of God, and of Truth, that I am ſure your Generoſity and your Wiſdom will never entertain a Calumny to my Prejudice.*

Our Family have had the Experience of your Piety, Modeſty and Goodneſs, to a Degree never to be forgotten, in paſſing over and pardoning the innumerable Hazards and Perſecutions that you were expoſed unto in the Days and by the Contrivance of my Grandfather: when all our Lives were forfeited, and in your Power and at your Mercy: but then after all the gracious Tenderneſs, your ſuperadding the Honour of taking me to your Table, as a Friend, and as a Gueſt; and likewiſe a Perſon ſo obnoxious, in regard of my Relations, nothing could be either greater, or more obliging.

David heard all this, without either animadverting upon *Mephiboſheth*, of putting *Ziba's* Credit to the Teſt; but he told him, That having given the whole Eſtate to *Ziba*, he would order him the one half of it back again.

Mephiboſheth replied, *Nay, Sir, ſo long as I have the Satisfaction of ſeeing my Lord the King upon his Throne again, even let* Ziba *take the Whole.*

Barzillai the *Gileadite*, a Man of

(*b*) Waſh his Feet. Theſe were ſome of the Inſtances wherein the *Jews* were wont to expreſs their Mourning; and they ſeem to be here mentioned as an Evidence of the Falſhood of *Ziba*'s Information againſt his Maſter, ſince no one who neglected him to ſuch Degree, would be ſuſpected of aſpiring to the Crown. Not dreſſing his Feet, may ſignify, either not cutting his Nails, or his not waſhing his Feet, which the Jews uſed frequently to do, becauſe of the bad Smell which was natural to them, as well as the *Arabians*, and ſome other Nations; and therefore his Omiſſion of this could not but make him offenſive to himſelf. Not trimming his Beard, was letting the Hair grow negligently and without any Order, for the Manner of the *Jews* was to cut the Lip upwards, and what grew likewiſe on the Cheek, but what was on the Chin, and ſo backwards to the Ear, that they ſuffered to grow. And not changing his Cloaths, muſt denote his not putting on any clean Linnen, but wearing the ſame Garments all the while.

real Honour and true Valour, who during the late War, had ſignalized himſelf in the Service of his King and Country, inſiſted on accompanying *David* in his Way to the River *Jordan*.

The King preſſed him with great Earneſtneſs to go through with him to *Jeruſalem*, promiſing that he would be as good as a Father to him, and that he ſhould want nothing that might be a Relief and Refreſhment to his old Age. But he excuſed himſelf, by alledging. that he ſhould be more at Eaſe in private Life, than in the Splendor and Luxury of a Palace.

And obſerving, *He was now eighty Years of Age, and paſt the Reliſh of Court Pleaſure; having no other Buſineſs in the World than to prepare for Death, and give Orders for his Funeral; wherefore he begged his Majeſty's Leave to retire home, where he might live after his uſual Manner.*

His Taſte was now gone, as to the Reliſh of delicious Meats and Drink, the Delights of Singing, Dancing, Revel's, harmonious Concerts of Inſtruments, Voices, and the like. His Hearing was impaired, and he had no longer any Senſe of theſe Entertainments.

The King by this Repreſentation of his Caſe, was prevailed upon to part with him; but upon Condition that his Son *Chimham*, went along with him, and took his Part in the beſt Offices he could do him.

Barzillai, with all dutiful Acknowledgment, left his Son with the King. And taking his Leave with the moſt earneſt Wiſhes for his long and moſt proſperous Reign, returned to his own Habitation.

The King proceeded towards *Gilgal*, attended by the whole Tribe of *Judah*, and one half of the Nation of *Iſrael*.

On his Arrival there came to him ſeveral of the Chiefs of the Country, accompanied by a vaſt Multitude of People, and charged the Tribe of *Judah*, for arrogating to themſelves too much Liberty, in going to the King, without conſulting their Brethren; whereas they ought unanimouſly to have gone together.

The Heads of the Tribe of *Juda*, deſired the reſt not to be incenſed at their going before; for they eſteemed it a Duty incumbent on them for Kindred Sake ſo to do. They did not propoſe any Advantage to themſelves in being ſo forward: neither had they given any Cauſe of Offence by their Expedition, to thoſe that came after them.

The Heads of the other Tribes were not at all pleaſed with this Way of Reaſoning; and demanding of them, *How they came to engroſs the King to themſelves? as if he were not their King likewiſe*; adding, *That he is by God's Providence indifferently the Governor of us all; ſo that we are eleven Parts of the whole, and you but one, and conſequently valuable in Compariſon to that Proportion; you have certainly done ill in ſtealing away to the King by yourſelves, without acquainting us.*

While the great Men were in hot Debate about this Affair, *Sheba*, the Son

Son of *Bichri*, a *Benjamite* (a Man of a factious and turbulent Spirit, ſtood up, and called out with a loud Voice, in the middle of the Croud, *Why talk they to us of a Part in* David? *or what have we to do with the Son of* Jeſſe?

He then cauſed the Trumpet to be ſounded, and iſſued a Proclamation, for the People to depart to their Tent, and thereupon a War was proclaimed againſt *David*.

The Multitude went over to the Party and Intereſt of *Sheba* ſaying only the Tribe of *Juda*, who ſtood by the King, and conducted him to *Jeruſalem*. Immediately on his Arrival, he expelled from his Palace, his Concubines, which his Son *Abſalom* had proſtituted in the Sight of the People; but he had them provided for elſewhere; though he himſelf never more had any Communication with them.

David made *Amaſa* his General, in the Place of *Joab*, giving him Orders to aſſemble what Troops he could of the Tribe of *Judah*, and bring them to him in three Days, that he might be ready to march out with them againſt the Son of *Bichri*.

Amaſa haſted to oblige the Royal Command; but finding he could not raiſe an Army ſo ſoon as he expected, and therefore *David* upon the third Day conſulted about the Affair with *Joab*, whom he thus addreſſed.

This Buſineſs of Sheba *is a Thing not to be trifled with; wherefore do you immediately take what Forces you have at Hand, with the ſix hundred Veterans, without Delay; take likewiſe your Brother* Abiſhai *with you, and march directly after the Son of* Bichri; *fight him whereſoever you find him, before he draws his Party into a Body; and take Care to prevent him from putting himſelf in Poſſeſſion of fortified Cities and ſtrong Holds; for if he once gains that Point, he may perhaps coſt us more Trouble to ſubdue him than* Abſalom *did*.

Joab in the ſame Inſtant poſted forward with his Brother, and the Troops that were aſſigned him to ſearch for *Sheba*.

On his arrival at *Gibeon*, a Village forty Furlongs diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, he met *Amaſa* in his March at the Head of a gallant Army. *Amaſa* advancing towards him to embrace him, *Joab*, with a Breaſt-plate upon his Body, and his Sword girt about him, going to meet him, induſtriouſly dropped his Sword out of the Scabboard, and preſently catched it up again, with one Hand, while he took *Amaſa* by the (*a*) Beard with the other,

(*a*) Beard. It was an ancient Cuſtom among the *Grecians*, to take the Perſon whom they addreſſed by the Chin or Beard, and the *Turks* to this Day continue the ſame Cuſtom. The *Arabians* alſo have a great regard to the Beard, the Wives and Children kiſs the Beards of their Huſbands and Fathers when they ſalute them; and even when two Friends meet together, they interchange Kiſſes in the ſame Manner. The like Cuſtom is ſtill preſerved among the *Indians*, who, when they would give a hearty Salute, take each other by the Chin, and cry, *Bobba*, that is Father, or *Bii*, Brother, as modern Travellers relate.

as if it had been to have ſaluted him, but ſheathed it in his Bowels, ſo that he died upon the Place.

This excreable Murder of a gallant Youth, nearly allied to him, and without Provocation, certainly was the higheſt Degree of Ignomy on the Character of *Joab*, who could be excited to it by no better Motive than a malicious Envy at his Preferment, and a Jealouſy of his being too much in the King's Favour.

It was much upon the ſame ground that he had already murdered *Abner*, and much after the ſame treacherous Manner that he did it too. In the former Caſe, indeed, he might appear to have ſome ſpecious Pretence for it, in revenge of his Brother *Hazael*; but for this ſeconnd Murder he had not even the Shadow of Excuſe.

Upon the Death of *Amaſa*, *Joab* advanced with his Army in queſt of *Sheba*, leaving only one Man with the General's Body, with Orders to make Proclamation thorough the Army, that he was a bad Man, and treated according to his Deſert; deſiring all thoſe that were for the King to follow *Joab*, and his Brother *Abiſhai*.

While the Body lay expoſed in the High-way, there were Multitudes gathered together, gazing upon him with Aſtoniſhment; ſo that the Man who had it in Charge, removed to a Village, where he lodged it in a Houſe, and threw a Coat over it; and as ſoon as the Surprize was over, the Soldiers marched forward after their Commanders.

Joab had by this Time purſued *Sheba* almoſt thro' the Land of *Iſrael*; and at laſt getting Intelligence, that he had ſheltered himſelf in a ſtrong Town, called *Beth-Maachah*, *Joab* ordered the Place to be immediately inveſted, and a Trench caſt about it; and, at the ſame Time to ply it with Mines and Batteries: being reſolved to deſtroy it, in Reſentment for the Indignity offered him by the Inhabitants, for ſhutting their Gates againſt him.

While the Army of *Joab* were battering the Town, a good and prudent Woman, out of Zeal for the Service of her Country in that Extremity, mounted the Wall, and called out to *Joab* from the Battlements, to ſpeak a Word with him out of the Hearing of the Soldiers.

Joab complied with her Deſire, and the Speeeh ſhe made him was to this Purpoſe. *Whereas God has given us Kings and Governors to protect us againſt our Enemies, and to maintain and preſerve us in Peace and Unity one with another; you are come, without any Injury or Provocation to ruin one of the moſt eminent Cities of the whole Land of* Iſrael.

Joab at this expreſſed his utter Abhorence of ſo foul a Deed; and ſaid, He hoped God would always keep him in a better Mind: adding, That he was ſo far from having the leaſt Thought of committing any Violence on this famous City, or of doing Harm to any one Perſon in it; that if the People would but deliver up *Sheba*, that rebellious Son of *Bichri*,

to

to Juſtice, he would at the ſame Moment draw off his Army.

Upon this Promiſe and Declaration the Woman called out to *Joab*, to have a little Patience, and *Sheba*'s Head ſhould be thrown down to him over the Wall.

Upon this, ſhe went back to the Citizens, and reaſoned the Matter with them in this Manner; *Are you then reſolved, like a Company of wicked Men, and for the Sake of a wicked Wretch, a meer Stranger to you, to ſacrifice your Habitations, your Wives, and your Children? What has* Sheba *done for you, to balance the Obligations you owe to* David? *Or ſetting aſide all other Arguments, are you able to defend your City againſt this mighty Army?*

The Woman's Addreſs, founded on Truth and Reaſon, carried with it ſuch Weight, that they forthwith cut off *Sheba*'s Head by Conſent, for a Compoſition, and caſt it over the Wall. Whereupon the Siege was forthwith raiſed: and the People returning to *Jeruſalem*, *David* declared *Joab* General of all his Troops.

Benaiah had the Command given him of all the Guards of the Body, and the ſix hundred Veterans, *Adoram* was the appointed Treaſurer. *Jehoſhaphat* was Recorder. *Sheva* Secretary. *Zadock* and *Abiathar* continuing in the Prieſthood.

Soon after this Tranſaction, it pleaſed God to afflict the *Iſraelites* with a ſore Famine throughout the Land, and *David* earneſtly beſought God to reveal unto him in Mercy, both the Cauſe of that grievous Judgment, and how it might be removed.

Anſwer was returned by the Prophets, That the Blood of the *Gibeonites*, which *Saul* had moſt perfidiouſly cauſed to be ſhed, cry'd to Heaven for Vengeance, as an Action not only contrary to the Oath and Promiſe of *Joſhua*, and ratified alſo by the Elders, but againſt Conſcience and common Juſtice. Wherefore they demanded, that the King ſhould give ſuch Satisfaction to the *Gibeonites* as they might require for the Loſs of their ſlaughtered Citizens, and then the *Iſraelites* might expect that God would be gracious to them in delivering them from their preſent Calamity.

When *David* came to underſtand this from the Prophets themſelves, he ſent to the *Gibeonites*, and aſked them, What Satifaction would content them?

They demanded that (*b*) ſeven of *Saul's* Sons, or of his Race, might be delivered up to Juſtice.

The King ordered ſeven of them to be found out, and put into the Hands of the *Gibeonites*, to do with

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(*b*) Seven. Whether the *Gibeonites* did right or wrong in exacting ſo ſevere a Retaliation for the Injury *Saul* and his Family had done them ſacred, the Hiſtory is no ways concerned. But to ſhew us from whence this barbarous Cuſtom of hanging up Men to appeaſe the Anger of the Gods proceeded, the Account of it is prefaced with this Obſervation, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 2. *The* Gibeonites *were not of the Chilaren of* Iſrael (for among them they learnt no ſuch Practice) *but*

the sacred

them as they pleaſed, but excepted *Mephiboſheth*, for the Sake of *Jonathan* his Father.

The *Gibeonites* accepted of this as a Compoſition, and hung them all; and being thus ſatisfied, God ſent them Rain, and ſo kindly a Continuance of it, that the Earth in due Time recovered its Fertility, and brought forth Fruits in their Seaſon, freſh and flouriſhing, as before.

Plenty being now reſtored to the afflicted Land, *David* turned his Thought towards the Reduction of his Enemies, marched out with his Army againſt the *Philiſtines*, fought and routed them: but following the Chace too far, *Iſhbi-benob*, the Son *Araph*, one of the Race of Giants, (whoſe Armour was a Coat of Mail, a Lance weighing three hundred Shekels, and his Sword by his Side) ſeeing *David* alone, and quite ſpent, turned ſhort upon him, ſtruck him to the Earth, and had certainly ſlain him, if *Abiſhai*, *Joab*'s Brother, had not in the preciſe Moment come to his Relief, beſtriding *David*, not only protected him, but killed his Enemy.

The whole Army, ſenſible of the Danger, the King was in, and of the Providence of his Deliverance, that the Commanders bound him by an Oath never to hazard his Royal Perſon any more in a Battle; being naturally brave, he laid himſelf too open to the common Chance of War; and if he ſhould miſcarry, it would be an irreparable Loſs to the Nation, to be deprived of the Bleſſings they enjoyed under his mild and gentle Adminiſtration.

Soon after this Engagement however the *Philiſtines* rallied their Forces, and fixed their Place of Rendezvous at *Gob*. *David* having Notice of it, diſpatched an Army immediately againſt them.

In this Expedition, *Sibbechai* the

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but a Remnant of the Amorites; who were addicted to this horrid Superſtition, of which the *Gibeonites*, ſtill retained ſome Tincture, notwithſtanding their abode among People of better Sentiments.

Though the Scripture ſpeaks in the Dialect of theſe Men, yet we greatly err in the Concluſion from hence, if we imagine that God can be delighted with human Sacrifices, which he ſo frequently and vehemently expreſſes his Deteſtation of.

He deſires the Death or Puniſhment of no Man, except it be in Purſuance of his wiſe Providence, or when the Criminal, by ſome bad Conduct, has forfeited his Life to the Government he lived under; nor would he have required the Execution of *Saul*'s Poſterity, had it not been to procure the poor diſtreſſed *Gibeonites* (who were truly Drudges to their *Hebrew* Maſters) a kinder Treatment for the Future; had it not been to teſtify his Abhorence of all Oppreſſion and Violence, and to ſhew that the Cities of the meaneſt Slaves, as well as the mightieſt Monarch, enter the Ears of the moſt high, that with him there is no Reſpect of Perſons, but that *the Rich and the Poor to him are both alike*.

Had it not been to repair the Injury done to his moſt holy Name, in the Violation of the Compact which both *Joſhua*, and the Princes of *Iſrael* made with his People, and confirmed with the Solemnity of an Oath: in a Word, had it not been by this Exemplary Puniſhment, to give Mankind a Leſſon of inſtruction concerning the Sacredneſs of Oaths and Treaties, and how religiouſly they ought to be obſerved, even towards thoſe that are in the loweſt Circumſtances of Life.

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Huſhathite, one of the braveſt Men in the whole Body, acquired great Reputation by cutting off ſeveral of the Race of Giants, (Men of prodigious Bulk and Strength) with his own Hand. He had in ſhort the Honour of a great Share in that Day's Succeſs.

The *Philiſtines* after this, brought another Army in the Field, and the King ſent out his Troops to encounter them. In this Encounter, *Elhanan*, who was allied to the King, ſignalized his Valour, by ſlaying in a ſingle Combat, one of the boldeſt Men the *Philiſtines* had in their Party: the reſt turned their Backs upon it, and loſt great Numbers in this Engagement.

Notwithſtanding this, they in a ſhort Time recruited yet once again, and encamped at a certain Town, not far from the Borders of the *Iſrealites*. The *Philiſtines* had in their Camp a Man ſix Cubits high; ſix Fingers on a Hand, and ſix Toes on each Foot, and one that valued himſelf upon his Deſcent from the Stock of Giants.

Jonathan the Son of *Shimei*, had the Honour to kill this gigantic Man, in ſingle Combat, and at the Head of his Troops, which contributed very much to the Succeſs of the Day; and acquired him the glorious Character of a valiant Man.

This was the laſt Battle the *Iſraelites* had with the *Philiſtines*; for from that Time forward, they never had Courage to make Head againſt them.

King *David* having now entirely vanquiſhed his moſt inveterate and powerful Enemies, and obtained for his People a profound, undiſturbed Peace, devoted himſelf to the Service of God, and compoſed divers Pſalms and Hymns to different Tunes, in order to celebrate the Praiſes of that God who had ſo often wrought Salvation for his choſen People.

Theſe Compoſitions he ordered to be ſung by the Levites, on the Sabbaths and other Feſtivals, in Company with muſical Inſtruments, provided for that Purpoſe. As they had an Inſtrument with ten Strings, to be touched with a Quill, the Pſaltery with twelve Strings, to be play'd upon with the Fingers; and large Cymbals of Braſs.

The ſacred Hiſtorian, having recorded ſeveral of the Hymns compoſed by the Royal Pſalmiſt, and having mentioned, that the King had about him eight and thirty Worthies, or Men renowned for their Valour and Probity, we ſhall particularly ſelect for minute Obſervation, the Names, Characters, and remarkable Achivements of five of them, by which Judgment may he formed of the reſt.

The firſt was *Adino*, the *Eznite*, who broke ſeveral Times into the Body of the Enemy, and killed eight hundred of them in one Encounter, with his own Hand.

The ſecond was *Eleazer*, the Son of *Dodo*, who was with the King in *Araſam*.

It was his Fortune to be in a Battle, where the *Iſraelites* finding themſelves mightily over-powered with

Numbers, gave way and fled, leaving him alone, to make good his Ground. This he did ſo effectually, that he gave a Stand to the whole Army, killing and wounding great Numbers; ſo that his Sword was, in a Manner, fixed to his right Hand with the Blood.

His great Example of Bravery encouraged the Fugitives, and made them rally, and charge the Enemy with ſuch Fury, that they recovered the Day, and crowned it with a wonderful and moſt illuſtrious Victory; *Eleazer* killing them, and the common ſoldiers ſtripping them.

The third was, *Shammah*, the Son of *Agee*, upon another Engagement with the *Philiſtines*, finding the *Iſraelites* giving way, oppoſed his ſingle Body to the whole Force of the Enemy; did great Execution upon them; broke their Order; put them to flight, and purſued them with a great Overthrow.

In theſe three Inſtances we read the Bravery of theſe three heroical Adventures, in the plain Field, and in the Face of an Enemy.

At another Time, when the King was at *Jeruſalem*, and the *Philiſtines* encamped before it, in the great Valley that extends as far as *Bethlehem*, about twenty Furlongs from the Town, *David* went up to a high Tower to aſk Counſel and Direction of God, about the Government and Event of the War. And ſpeaking to his Friends of the delicious Water that was in his Country, and eſpecially of the Well at *Bethlehem*, that was next the Gate, *What would I give, with earneſt Deſire, exclaimed he, for a Draught of that Water!*

Theſe three men over-hearing him, went their Way immediately, broke thro' the Camp of the Enemy, fetched ſome Water from the Well, and came back with it the ſame Way they went. The Barbarians ſtanding amazed all the while at the Hardineſs of the Undertaking, and not daring, tho' ſo few in Number, to interrupt them in their Return.

Upon their preſenting of this Water to the King, he gave God Thanks for the Safety of them that brought it; but it would not become him to drink it, for, he ſaid, It was the Price of Blood, and ſo he poured it upon the Ground, as an Offering to the Lord.

The fourth was, *Abaſhai*, the Brother of *Joab*, that in one Day ſlew three hundred of the Enemy.

The fifth, and the laſt of theſe worthy Champions we ſhall mention was, *Benaiah*, a Man of a ſacerdotal Family, who fought upon a Challenge, with two Brothers, of eminent Fame for Feats of Arms among the *Moabites*, and killed them both.

He fought again with an *Egyptian* of monſtrous Force and Size; and cloſing with him, threw himſelf naked, and his Adverſaty armed at all Points, forced his Spear out of his Hands, diſpatched him with his own Weapon; and for his greater Honour, diſarmed him while he was yet living.

He performed another Feat of Valour, equal, if not ſuperior, to the reſt. There was a Lion dropped into

to a Pitfall; the Snow drove in, and covered the Mouth of it; ſo that the Beaſt finding no Way to get out again, roared moſt hideouſly. *Benaiah* happening to paſs that Way, hearing of this Outcry, went to the Place, and with a Staff killed the Lion.

There were five great Men; and the other three and thirty not inferior to them.

David now determined to number the People of all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, not remembering the old Precept of the great Law-giver *Moſes*, that as often as it ſhould be found requiſite to muſter the People, an Oblation ſhould be offered unto the Lord of a Shekel a Head. But ſent *Joab* abruptly to take a general Account.

Joab excuſed himſelf from it as a Thing that was needleſs; but *David* would not admit of the Excuſe, and therefore poſitively commanded him to go about it immediately,

In Obedience therefore to the King's ſolemn Injunction, he ſummoned the Scribes and the Heads of the Tribes to adviſe with them, and went thro' the whole Land of *Iſrael*, to make the Computation.

After nine Months and twenty Days, *Joab* returned to *Jeruſalem*, and told the King upon the whole, that beſides the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and of *Levi*, which he had not as yet taken an account of, he found the Number of the reſt of the *Iſraelites* to amount to eight hundred thouſand Men, who were able to bear Arms. In the Tribe of *Judah* alone having reckoned five hundred Thouſand.

When *Joab* was abſent on this Buſineſs, *David* being informed by the Prophet, that the Anger of the Lord was kindled againſt him for his raſh Conduct, and not complying with the Precepts delivered down by his Servant *Moſes*. Whereupon he betook himſelf to true Repentance, begged Pardon of Almighty God, with Prayer and Supplications, and obtained it.

After this, God ſent the Prophet *Gad* to him, with an offer of three Things to his Choice; that is, either a ſeven Years Famine, three Months Flight before an Enemy, or three Days Peſtilence; and to demanded an immediate Anſwer from him, which of the three he would take?

David found himſelf in a great Streight which to chuſe, thus arguing with himſelf. If I chuſe the the Famine, it would look as if I had more Concern for myſelf than for my People; for my Store-houſes are much better provided with Corn than theirs. If to lie at the Mercy of an Enemy, it appears the ſame ſtill; for I have ſtrong Holds and Caſtles to repair to for my own Safety. But the third, is a Calamity that threatens Governors in common with their Subjects.

As he was thus deliberating, the Prophet preſſed him to an immediate anſwer; to which he made this Return. *That he would rather fall into the Hands of God than of Man; and therefore ſubmitting himſelf to God's pleaſure and Goodneſs, he choſe the Peſtilence.*

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The prophet had no ſooner received, and reported *David*'s Anſwer, than the *Iſraelites* were ſeized with a moſt unaccountable Diſtemper, that was attended with certain Death, and accompanied with accidents that baffled all the Doctors, either to find the Cauſe or Remedy. So that in fine they died in prodigious Numbers. Some went off with Gripes, and Torment that diſpatched them in a trice; ſome with Faintneſs and Languors, in deſpite of the Phyſicians; others with Giddineſs, dimneſs of Sight, Suffocations, &c.

Some again expired themſelves, before they could throughly perform the Office of the Burial for their dead Friends.

The Mortality, in ſhort, was ſo great, that betwixt break of Day and Dinner-time, there were ſwept away by this Peſtilence, ſeventy thouſand Perſons.

The deſtroying Angel was now going to *Jeruſalem* upon the ſame Commiſſion; but the King putting on Sackcloth, and humbly ſupplicating God with Prayers and Tears, to remove this dreadful Judgement; in the Middle of his Ejaculations, he lifted up his Eyes, and diſcovered an Angel, with a drawn Sword, moving toward *Jeruſalem*.

Upon this Apparition he broke out into a more paſſionate Exclamations, *Lord*, ſays he, *puniſh the Shepherd; but alas! what have theſe Sheep done? Pour down thy Wrath rather upon me and my Family; but ſpare the innocent People, I beſeech thee.*

The earneſt Supplications of the pious and patriot King, reached the Throne of Grace, and God immediately put a Stop to the Peſtilence; ordering the King, by the Mouth of the Prophet *Gad*, to go up without Delay to the Threſhing-floor of *Araunah*, and there to erect an Altar, and to offer Sacrifice upon it.

David went away to the Place, according to his Direction, where he found *Araunah* threſhing his Corn, who no ſooner ſaw *David* and his Sons coming towards him, than he ran out with Reverence to them.

Now this *Araunah* was a *Jebuſite* and ſo particular a Friend of *David*'s that he protected and ſecured him from all Damage upon the very taking of the City, as had been before obſerved.

At the King's Approach, he thus humbly addreſſed him, *Is there any Thing now that my Lord will be pleaſed to command of his Servant?*

I come, ſaid *David*, *to buy your Threſhing-floor, and to raiſe an Altar to God upon it, and to offer Sacrifice.*

Nay, replied, *Araunah*, *not only my Threſhing floor, but my Ploughs, my Oxen, and Burnt-offerings, are all at my Lord's Service. And I beſeech that God to look graciouſly down upon your Worſhip and Sacrifice.*

The King was exceedingly pleaſed with the Candor and Greatneſs of this good Man's Mind; but told him, That it muſt be a purchaſe, not a Gift; for it would not be acceptable, to offer a Sacrifice that ſhould coſt him nothing. So *Araunah* committed

mitted himſelf to *David*, who gave him fifty Shekels for the Floor; offered Sacrifices and Burnt-offerings, and Peace-offering, upon it. After which Solemnity, *David* was reinſtated in God's Grace and Favour.

This was the Place whither *Abraham* brought his Son *Iſaac* to, when he was commanded to offer him for a Sacrifice. *David's* grateful Remembrance of the Favour of God in averting the heavy Judgment at his Interceſſion, and afterwards accepting the Oblations he offered, came to a Reſolution to call the whole Place by the Name of the People's Altar, or the *Iſraelite's* Altar, and to build a Temple there; which Purpoſe was afterward ratified by God himſelf, who ſent his Prophet to him with a Prediction, that his Succeſſor ſhould there build a Temple.

David employ'd People upon this, to take an Account how many Strangers he had in his Dominions, which were reckoned to amount to about one hundred and eighty thouſand Perſons.

Out of theſe he choſe eighty thouſand to work in Stone; the reſt to be employ'd in carrying all Sorts of Materials; appointing thirty-five thouſand to overſee the Workmen.

There was provided for the People a prodigious Quantity of Braſs, Iron, and Cedar Wood in abundance was brought from Tyre and Sydon. Tho' *David* told his familiar Friends, that theſe Materials were only to lie ready for Uſe, when his Son ſhould have Occaſion for them, which would ſave Time and Trouble, and expedite the Work; but that as yet, his Son was too young and unexperienced to manage and direct ſo ardous an Undertaking.

CHAP. II.

David *delivers to his Son* Solomon *ſpecial Inſtructions, concerning the Building of a Temple, to be devoted to God's immediate Honour, Worſhip and Service.* Adonijah, David's *fourth Son, on his growing infirm, claims the Government by* Succeſſion; *but relinquiſhes the ſame upon the Oppoſition of the People.* Solomon *proclaimed King.* David's *Tranſactions a ſhort Time before his Death, viz. His Speech to the People, and Advice to his Son concerning the Work he had left him to accompliſh; and the future Adminiſtration of Affairs. His Death and Sketch of Character.*

SUCH was the State and Condition of the *Iſraelites*, when *David* called his Son *Solomon* to him, and gave him ſpecial Charge, That as ſoon as he came to the Throne, he ſhould enter upon the Building of a Temple, for the Honour and Worſhip of God; the Charge ran in Terms to this Effect.

I would have done it myſelf; but being frequently engaged in War, and conſequently a Man of Blood, I was forbidden by an expreſs Command from Heaven, and the Work reſerved by Providence for my youngeſt Son.

This Son, according to the Predic-

tion was to be called Solomon, *who ſhould be a Prince of Peace; of whom it was foretold, That God would take him with a paternal Affection into his Care, and that the whole People of* Iſrael *ſhould be happy under his Adminiſtration; and enjoy not only a Peace (the greateſt of all temporal Bleſſings) with Foreigners, but live free from any evil or inteſtine Diviſions among themſelves.*

Now, continued David, *ſince you were deſigned to be a King, even before you were born, do you endeavour to behave yourſelf as a Man otherwiſe worthy of that Honour conferred on you by Providence; govern yourſelf according to the Meaſure of Piety, Juſtice, and true Fortitude; pay a Reverence to the Precepts, Laws, and Traditions of* Moſes; *obſerve them religiouſly yourſelf; nor do not ſuffer any Violation of them in others.*

As for the Temple that God hath appointed to be built in your Reign, be ſure to attend it as you ought to do, and let not the Difficulty of the Work diſcourage you; for it ſhall be my Care to have all the Materials in Readineſs for you to begin withal, upon your firſt Entrance upon the Government of Iſrael.

I have provided ten thouſand Talents of Silver, Braſs and Iron to an immenſe Quantity, beſide Timber and Stone, in vaſt Abundance.

You ſhall have alſo many thouſands of Carpenters and Maſons, and the Means of ſupplying yourſelf with what you want.

Attend your Buſineſs with Care and Diſpatch; for upon the finiſhing of this Undertaking, you may aſſure yourſelf of the perpetual Favour and Protection of Almighty God.

Having delivered this Charge to his Son; *David* enjoined the principal Men of the ſeveral Tribes to concur with his Son's, in the pious Deſign of rearing an Edifice to perpetuate the Glories of the God of *Iſrael*, and without being ſolicitious upon any other Account, to attend the Buſineſs of Religion in the firſt Place; for that alone would be ſufficient to ſecure the Peace and Welfare of the Commonwealth, which are the neverfailing Rewards of Righteouſneſs and Juſtice.

He appointed alſo, that upon the finiſhing of the Temple, the Ark ſhould be placed in it, with all the holy Veſſels and Utenſils thereunto belonging, which he told them ſhould have been there depoſited long before, if their Forefathers had obſerved the Injunction God laid upon them, of raiſing a Temple to him immediately upon their coming into the Land of Promiſe.

Theſe Counſels and Exhortations of *David* were addreſſed indifferently, both to his Son and to the Princes.

Though *David* was not yet arrived to an Age that was deemed an advanced one in thoſe Days of Longevity, (being now but ſeventy Years old;) yet his Conſtitution was greatly impaired by the Hardſhips he had undergone, both in eſcaping the Indignation of *Saul*, and in numberleſs Campaigns; inſomuch that his Blood was ſo chilled, that all the Coverings and Blankets they could throw over him

him would not procure him any Heat; ſo that a Council of Phyſicians was called, and they unanimouſly agreed, that the beſt Thing for a Man under thoſe Decays, was a fair and young *(c)* Bed-fellow; as the Warmth being gentle and kindly, would relieve Nature without Force. They found out upon this, in the City, a very beautiful Woman that came up exactly to their Preſcription, and put her to Bed to him. Her Name was *Abiſhag*, and her Buſineſs only to lie by him, and comfort him; which ſhe might ſafely and innocently do, the King being now paſt the Temptations of all irregular Diſpoſitions.

David had a fourth Son, whoſe Name was *Adonijah*, born to him by *Haggith*, and the next after *Abſalom*, in Point of Beauty, Stature, and Graceſulneſs of Perſon; nay, and in his Ambition too, he was not far behind him.

This *Adonijah* (*Abſalom* being dead) laid Claim to the Government, as the next in Succeſſion, and obtaining many Friends by Intereſt and Popularity to aſſiſt him, toward the gaining of his Point. He furniſhed himſelf with a pompous Equipage of Chariots, Horſes, Guards, and the like; while his Father innocently ſuffered him to go on, without the leaſt Check or Caution; nay, or ſo much as aſking him the Deſign of this mighty Preparation.

His chief Accomplices were *Joab* the General, and *Abiathar* the High-Prieſt; but *Zadock* the High-Prieſt, and the Prophet *Nathan*, *Benaiah* the Captain of the Guards, *Shimei* the King's Friends, and the Generality of Soldiery, were in a different Intereſt, and oppoſed his Meaſures.

To ſtrengthen his Intereſt, and promote his ambitious Deſign, *Adonijah* prepared a mighty Treat in the Suburbs of *Jeruſalem*, near the Fountain in the King's Gardens.

To this Entertainment he invited all his Brothers, ſave only *Solomon*, and there was *Joab* alſo, and *Abiathar*, and the Chiefs of the Tribe of *Judah*; but neither *Zadock*, *Nathan*, *Benaiah* nor any others of that Intereſt, were invited.

The Prophet *Nathan* took Notice of this to *Bathſheba*, the Mother of *Solomon*, in theſe Words. *Look ye; here is* Adonijah *ſetting himſelf up for King, and* David *knows nothing of what's done: wherefore let it be your Care, as well for your Son's Sake, as for your own, to look after this Affair.*

Go you to David, *and when you have him alone, remind him of his Oath,*

(*c*) It is the Obſervation of *Galen*, that nothink ſo effectually procures Heat and Health, as the Application of any thing young to the the ſtomach; the Advice, therefore, of *David*'s Phyſicians was phyſically good; but it had been ſinful, and ſuch as he could not have followed, had not this young Woman been taken as his concubinary Wife.

In thoſe Days ſuch Wives were allowable; and that ſhe ſerved him in this Capacity, is very manifeſt from the Account here given of her.

that Solomon *ſhould reign after him; and yet* Adonijah *is as good as upon the Throne already.*

While you are diſcourſing this Matter with the King, I may come into the Chamber to you, and ſecond your Information.

Bathſheba followed the Prophet's Advice, went in to the King, where the made her Reverence; and after Leave given her to deliver what ſhe had to ſay, ſhe gave *David* an Account of the Affair in the very Words the Prophet had dictated to her, telling him moreover the Circumſtances of *Adonijah*'s Entertainment; whom he had invited, and whom he had left out. Alſo, that the People were in a Suſpenſe what to do, till he ſhould declare his Succeſſor, and that her own Life, and her Sons, were both at Stake upon the Iſſue.

While *Bathſheba* was relating theſe Circumſtadces, the King's Servants brought Word, That the Prophet *Nathan* was at the Door to wait upon him. He was immediately called in, and upon the very Inſtant of entering the Preſence, he aſked *David*, in ſome Confuſion, *Whither or no he that Day tranferred his Government to* Adonijah, *and declared him his Succeſſor? He has made a very ſplendid Feaſt, invited ſuch and ſuch Perſons to it; omitted ſuch and ſuch others; and now are they eating, drinking, and making merry, with Healths and Acclamations to the Honour of their new King* Adonijah: *but that neither himſelf,* Zadock *the High Prieſt, and* Benaiah *the Captain of the Guards, were invited.*

Now, it would be well, added the Prophet, to let the World underſtand whether this be done with your Knowledge and Approbation, or not.

Bathſheba withdrew when the Prophet came in, was now, by the King's Order, called for back again. She was accordingly brought to *David*, and he addreſſed her in this Manner. *The Thing that I have ſworn formerly, I do now ſwear over again, in the Preſence of the great God. Your Son* Solomon *ſhall reign after me, and ſit upon my Throne; and you ſhall ſee it done this very Day.*

Upon which Declaration and Aſſurance, ſhe ſubmiſſively took her Leave, wiſhing the King a long Life.

The King thus warned by the Prophet *Nathan*, immediately determined to put into Execution his Reſolution concerning the Elevation of his Son *Solomon* to the Throne of *Iſrael*, after his Deceaſe, the aboliſhing the Claim of *Adonijah*, he ſent for *Zadock* and *Benaiah*, and bid them take the prophet *Nathan*, and the Royal Guards with them; mount *Solomon* upon the King's Mule, carry him out of the City to the Fountain that is called *Gihon*, there anoint him with holy Oil, and proclaim him King.

This Office being aſſigned to the High-Prieſt and the Prophet, Command was further given, That they ſhould conduct him thro' the Heart of the City with Trumpets ſounding before him, and Multitude of Troops following with Shouts and Rejoicings, crying, *Long live King* Solomon!

to

to the End, that the whole Nation might be appriſed, that his Father had declared him his Succeſſor.

David, on this ſolemn Occaſion, laid on his Son the ſtrict Charge to govern not only the Tribe of *Judah*, but the whole Nation of the *Iſraelites* according to the ſtricteſt Rules and Meaſures of Piety and Juſtice.

Benaiah, after this, with an affectionate Ejaculation for God's Bleſſing upon *Solomon*, and the whole Proceeding, went inſtantly away with the reſt of the Company, according to their Order, to execute the Office aſſigned them.

They mounted *Solomon* upon the King's Mule; conducted him out of the City to the Fountain; anointed him with holy Oil, and then brought him back again, attended with the Acclamations, and the unanimous Wiſhes of the People for his long and happy reign. They brought him afterward to the Palace, and placed him upon his Father's Throne.

This Solemnity being over, the People devoted themſelves to Jollity, Feaſting, Muſick, Dancing, and all other chearful Diverſions, to ſuch a Degree of Tranſport and Rejoicings, that the Clamour of their extravagant joy coming to the Ears of *Adonijah* and his Gueſts, it did not a little ſurprize them; *Joab* himſelf declaring that the Noiſe he heard of Shouts and Trumpets did not at all pleaſe him; indeed, it gave ſuch a damp to their Jollity, and diſreliſh to their Entertainment, that none of them had any Appetite to enjoy what was before them.

While they were in this melancholy Poſture, *Jonathan*, the Son of *Abiathar* the High Prieſt, came running to them in great Haſte, and *Adonijah*, not apprehending the doleful Purport of his Meſſage, but rather that he brought good News, received him chearfully.

When *Jonathan* gave them the whole Relation of the King's Orders, and the Proceeding concerning *Solomon*; they had no ſooner heard the melancholy Circumſtance, than every Man ſlinked away from the Banquet to his own Home.

Adonijah indeed, conſcious to himſelf of an Indignity, too great to be forgiven, fled for Sanctuary to the Horns *(d)* of the Altar, and there begged for Pardon.

(*d*) Horns of the Altar. Though there is no Precept in the Law to make the Altar a priviledged Place; yet in Conformity to the Cuſtoms of other Nations, the Jews ſeem to have done it; for that other Nations uſed this Cuſtom, appears from that Paſſage in Virgil:

Talibus orabat dictis araſque tenebat.

'Twas thus he prayed, and thus the Altars held.

And it ſeems not unlikely, that as the People, when they came into the Land of *Canaan*, had Cities appointed by God, whereunto the Manſlayer might flee; ſo, while they continued in the Wilderneſs, the Camp of the *Levites* might ſerve for the ſame Purpoſe; and from the Words in *Exodus* xxi. 14. where God ordered the wilful Murderer *to be taken from the Altar that he may die*, it ſeems unqueſtionly true, that even in the Land of *Canaan*, the Altar continued a ſanctuary for thoſe who fled to it.

When *Solomon* came to underſtand the Fate of *Adonijah*, and that he inſiſted upon ſome Security to be given him for an Indemnity from Puniſhment, with as much Prudence as Clemency, he granted him a Pardon for what was paſt; but with a Precaution, to beware how he behaved himſelf for the Future; for if he ſhould be found in any ſuch Practice again, his Deſtruction ſhould lie at his own Door.

Whereupon *Solomon* ordered him to be brought to him from his Place of Refuge; and when he had paid his Duty and Reverence to the new King, he bid him go to his own Houſe again in Peace, and to behave himſelf for the Time to come like a good Man, as he reſpected his own intereſt and Welfare.

David, eſteeming it neceſſary for the future Peace and Tranquility of the Kingdom, that *Solomon* ſhould be proclaimed and recognized King of the whole Nation of *Iſrael*: to effect which he ſummoned all the Princes to *Jeruſalem*, together with the Prieſts and Levites; and found upon the Roll thirty eight thouſand Men among them, that were above thirty Years of Age; out of which Number there were twenty thouſand to attend the Building of the Temple; Judges and their Clerks ſix thouſand; four thouſand Porters belonging to the Houſe of God, and as many Singers and Muſicians, of which we have already hinted, he divided into Families; and upon ſeparating the Prieſts from the reſt of the Tribe, he found twenty-four of them; that is, ſixteen deſcended from *Eleazar*, and eight from *Ithamar*; appointing every Family to officiate eight Days, as from Sabbath to Sabbath, and ſo to proceed in regular Succeſſion.

The Lots of the whole were caſt in the Preſence, of *David*, and of the High-Prieſts, *Zadock* and *Abiathar*, together with the Heads of the Tribes.

The Lot that came out firſt, being entered upon the Roll (the firſt Family) and to the ſecond, and the third, &c. to the twenty-fourth, in Order as it happened, which Way of Diſtribution continues in Uſe to this Day.

He divided the Tribe of *Levi* alſo in twenty-four Parts, to ſucceed one after another, according to the Chance of the Lot, in the ſame Manner with the Prieſts. But the Preference was ſtill given to the Poſterity of *Moſes*, to whom were committed the Cuſtody of the holy Treaſure, and the Diſpoſal of the Bounties and Donations of Princes, and Royal Benefactors.

He likewiſe ordered the whole Tribe of *Levi*, and the Prieſts, to attend the Service of God, Day and Night in their Turns, according to the primitive Inſtitution of *Moſes*.

Having thus judiciouſly divided the Tribes, and appointed the Manner in which they ſhould reſpectively ſucceed to the ſacred Functions of the Temple, he proceeded to the Arrangement of his whole Army into twelve Diviſions, with their Commanders in Chief, Tribunes, Centurions, and their

their Subordinates; every Diviſion to conſiſt of twenty four thouſand Men, and each of thoſe Diviſions to do a Month's Duty to their reſpective Courſes, upon the Guard of *Solomon*'s Palace, together with their Tribunes and Centurions; every Part to have its diſtinct Officer or Judge; and ordained that he ſhould be a Man of approved Integr ty.

He appointed alſo Overſeers of the King's Income, Vineyards, Lands, Huſbandry, Flocks, and Herds, &c. whom it would be too tedious here to recount.

When the King had brought Things to this wiſe Concluſion, he called a general Aſſembly of the *Hebrew* Magiſtrates, the Princes of the Tribes, the Officers of the Army, and the Managers of the Revenue; and then raiſing himſelf upon an Eminence, ſpoke to the People from his Throne to the following Effect:

I am now to give you to underſtand, my Countrymen and Brethren, that I have had it a long Time in my Thought to erect a Temple to the Lord, and I treaſur'd up a great Quantity of Gold, and a hundred thouſand Talents of Silver toward the Charge of the Undertaking; but it hath pleaſed God in his Providence, by the Mouth of the Prophet Nathan, *to put a Stop to my Deſign, upon this Conſideration, that he would not have the Foundation of his holy Houſe laid by Hands that had been dipped in Blood, which mine have inevitably been, though in the Blood of your Enemies, by Reaſon of the Wars I have been forced into, in the Righteous and neceſſary Defence and Vindication of your Liberties. But the Prophet told me further, that God would tranſmit the Care of it to my Son and Succeſſor, both to begin and finiſh the Work. You know, that our Father* Jacob *had twelve Sons; and that* Judah *was yet choſen by common Conſent to be Ruler of all the Reſt. You know likewiſe, that I myſelf, though there were ſix Brothers of us, was advanced by God to the Government, and that none of the Reſt thought themſelves injured; wherefore I muſt now require in like Manner of you, and of all my Sons, that you ſubmit cheerfully and dutifully to my Son* Solomon; *and that you do it without any Murmuring, Faction, or civil Diſſention; for it is from God's immediate Command and Commiſſion that he derives his Authority. If That God ſhould have ſet even a Stranger over you, how great a Folly and Wickedneſs it would have been for you to murmur at it? But how thankful ought you now to be for the Choice of ſo near a Relation, when you yourſelves are Partakers of the Honour that is done to your Brother. There is nothing I ſo much long for, as to ſee Gods gracious Promiſes take a ſpeedy Effect; and the whole People without any more Delay put into a full and laſting Poſſeſſion of the Bleſſings they are to enjoy under the Reign of* Solomon. *All this,* (addreſſing himſelf to *Solomon*) *my dear Son, will be made Good, and every thing ſucceed to your Wiſh, ſo long as you govern according to Piety and Juſtice, with a Reſpect to your Duty both to God and Man, upholding in the Steps of your Force-fathers; but whenever you tranſgreſs theſe Bounds,*

Bounds, there is nothing but Miſery and Ruin to be expected as the Conſequence.

When *David* had finiſhed his excellent Counſel, both to his People and Son, concerning the reciprocal Duties they owed each other, in the Preſence of a mighty Concourſe, he delivered to the latter a Draught of the Form and Model of the Temple, from Top to Bottom, ſuch as the Foundation and Superſtructure; the Height and Breadth of the Fabrick; the private Cells, their Number and Dimenſions; what Veſſels of Gold and Silver were to be provided, with Directions for their preciſe Weight.

He alſo exhorted him at the ſame Time, with all Diligence and Application, to proſecute the Building; likewiſe preſſing the Princes and the Tribes of *Levi* to contribute their Aſſiſtance; not only in regard to his Youth, and Want of Experience, but out of a Reverence to his divine Commiſſion, which both entitled him to the Government, and authorized and predetermined him to this Province.

And, as a farther Encouragement, obſerved that it would not be a Work of any great Difficulty (for the Materials were provided to their Hand) ſo many Talents of Gold, more of Silver, Stone and Timber, Carpenters, Stone-cutters, and other Workmen; a great Treaſure in Emeralds, and other precious Stones, over and above; beſide a further Supply of (e) three thouſand Talents of the pureſt Gold, out of his own Treaſury, for the adorning of the Holy Place, and the Chariot of God, and the Cherubims that were to cover the Ark.

The Aſſembly pleaſed with the pious and ſpirited Addreſs of the King, unanimouſly concurred, both Princes, People and Levites in their reſpective Promotion of the ardous Undertaking, and propoſed very large Contributions.

They offered among them to bring in (f) five thouſand Talents of Gold, a hundred thouſand of Silver, ten thouſand Shekels, and an immenſe Maſs of Iron. They had precious Stones, brought them into the Treaſury, where they were depoſited in the Cuſtody of one *Jalus*, of the Race of *Moſes*.

The People were infinitely pleas'd upon the whole, and *David* above all the reſt, to ſee ſuch an univerſal Agreement and Willingneſs, both in Princes, Prieſts, and People, towards carrying on the Work; for which he bleſſed God with a loud Voice, in the Stile of, *Father, and Creator of Heaven and Earth; the Governor and Protector of the* Iſraelites, *and*

(e) Three thouſand Talents weighed three hundred, forty two thouſand, one hundred and eighty ſeven Pounds, and ſix Ounces; and their value in Gold amounted to ſixteen millions, four hundred and twenty five thouſand Pounds, *Engliſh* Money.

(f) Five thouſand Talents weighed five hundred and ſeventy thouſand, three hundred and twelve Pounds, and ſix Ounces, and their value in Gold amounted to twenty ſeven millions, three hundred and ſeventy five thouſand Pounds, *Engliſh* Money.

the bleſſed Fountain of Happineſs to the People committed to his Charge.

He concluded his Devotions with a fervant prayer for the Comfort and Happineſs of the Nation; and with particular Wiſhes of Peace of Conſcience, and the Bleſſing of an unſpotted Innocence and Integrity on his Son.

He then called upon the People to join with him in Thanks to Almighty God for all his Mercies; upon which they fell upon their Faces, and worſhipped; and coming afterwards to *David*, made their Acknowledgements for all the Benefits and Advantages they had enjoyed under his Reign.

The Day following was a great Day of Sacrifices; a thouſand Calves, a thouſand Rams, and a thouſand Lambs, for a Burnt-Offering; and afterwards, many thouſand Victims more for Peace-Offerings. It was a Day dedicated to feaſting, both by the King and People.

Solomon was now a ſecond Time anointed, declared and recognized by the People, for their lawful King, and *Zadock*, by the Voice of the whole Multitude, appointed their High-Prieſt.

Thus generally acknowledged by the common Voice, *Solomon* was conducted to the Place, and placed upon his Father's Throne; from which Day forward, the People paid him true and faithful Allegiance as King over *Iſrael*.

Good King *David*, finding himſelf decline daily, and perceived that his Diſſolution approached, ſent for his Son *Solomon*, in order to beſtow on him his laſt Advice, and take his final Leave.

When he approached his venerable Father: he addreſſed him in this pious and pathetic Strain, *Son I am going to my fathers; and you that I leave behind me, are in due Time to come to me; which is no more than the paying of the common Debt to Nature. There is no returning from the Grave, and when we are gone, we have done with this World for ever. Wherefore while I am yet among the Living, and before it be too late, let me remind you of the ſame Things once again, that I have ſo often inculcated on you heretofore.*

Govern your Subjects according to Juſtice. Worſhip that God from whom you have received your Dignity as well as your Being, as you are bound to do.

Obſerve his Precepts, and keep his Laws, as they have been handed down to you from Moſes; *and take Care that you never forſake them, neither for Fear, Flattery, or any other Paſſion or Intereſt whatſoever. For otherwiſe, you can never pretend to hope for the Bleſſing's of God's Favour and Providence.*

But if you behave yourſelf with Reverence and Submiſſion towards God, as you ought to do, and as I wiſh you may do, your kingdom will be eſtabliſhed to yourſelf, and the Succeſſion of it continued in your Family, from Generation to Generation.

Let me now remind you of the Ini-

quity of Joab, (*a*) *in the Murder of* Abner, *the Son of* Ner, *and of* Amaſa, *the Son of* Jether, *two great Captains, and worthy Men; and all this purely out of Malice and Envy. You may do by him as you think fit.*

The Truth of it is, I had puniſhed him myſelf, but that he was ſo popular I durſt not meddle with him.

As for the ſons of Barzillai *the* Gileadite, *I muſt deſire you for my Sake to be very kind to them, and to do them all the good Offices you can: not as an Obligation, but in Requital of the generous Friendſhips I received from their Father in the Time of my Baniſhment, which I reckoned as a Debt incumbent upon our whole Family.*

As for the ſon of Gera, Shemei *the* Benjamite *that hunted me with ſuch bitter Curſing and Reviling in the Days of my perſecution at* Mahanaim, *and afterwards meeting me at the River* Jordan, *obtained my pardon for it; you may take ſome warrantable Occaſion to require him yet for that Affront.*

Having thus delivered his Sentiments and Counſel to his Son, both concerning his Duty towards God; the Adminiſtration of Juſtice, the Requiting of his Friends, and the Puniſhing of his Enemies, *David* gave up the Ghoſt, in about the 70th Year of his Age, after he had reigned ſeven Years and ſix Months over the Tribe of *Judah* at *Hebron*, and thirty three Years more over all *Iſrael* and *Jeruſalem*.

He was a man of great Goodneſs, and endued with all the Royal Excellencies that could qualify a Prince for the diſcharge of ſo great a Truſt. He was valient, and often ſignalized his courage, both in ſingle Combat and general Rencounters, expoſing his Perſon to the moſt imminent Hazard in the Defence of his People. He

(*a*) Iniquity of *Joab*. From the Inſtructions which *David* here gives to his Son *Solomon* concerning *Joab* and *Shimei*, many have been led to think, that he left the World in a very vindictive and unforgiving Temper; but this Miſconception, ariſes from nothing elſe but a Want of diſtinguiſhing between the ſame Perſon, when acting or adviſing in a publick, and when in a private Capacity.

Joab does many valourous and brave Acts for the honour of his King, and the enlargement of his Dominions, but then he ſullies the whole by his barbarous Murders, and inſolent behaviour.

Shemei curſes *David* in the time of his Troubles, and yet David forgives him, and promiſes he ſhall not die.

They both of them had committed Crimes enough to forfeit their Lives; but *David* thinking it not adviſable, for Reaſons of State, to ſeize either of them at preſent, directs his Son, if ever they give him a ſufficient Provocation, not to ſpare them; and in ſo doing he is not to be conſidered as a private Man, acting upon the Principles of Reſentment, but as a King and Governor, giving Advice to his Son and Succeſſor in Affairs of State.

It was for the Publick good that ſuch Offenders as *Joab* and *Shemei* ſhould ſuffer at a proper Time, and as Providence ſhould direct; and therefore, ſince his Promiſe and Oath to the one of them, and the formidable Power and Intereſt of the other, had reſtrained them in his Life-Time, from puniſhing them as they deſerved; and ſince it would have been unjuſt in itſelf, and derogatory to the Glory of his Son's Reign, to ſuffer ſuch notorious Crimes to go unpuniſhed; he recommended to his Son the Conſideration of thoſe Things, and like a wiſe Majeſtrate, laid a Scheme for the Puniſhment of Wickedneſs, without Regard to any private Revenge.

Buried

ſwayed his Soldiers by his Example, rather than by the Rigour of his Diſcipline.

He was judicious in the Choice of his Councils; of a ſingular Preſence of Mind; of ſharp Foreſight in the improving all Advantages, and the obviating of foreſeen Difficulties.

To this he was temperate and ſober, affable to all, tender towards the diſtreſſed Righteous, and humane to all.

He was a Prince that never made an ill Uſe of his Power, ſaving only in the Caſe of the Wife of *Uriah*.

He left a Treaſure to his Succeſſor greater than ever any other Prince whatſoever left before him.

He was (*b*) buried at *Jeruſalem*, with all the Solemnity of Royal Pomp and Magnificence; and to add to the Splendor of the Ceremony, his Son *Solomon* depoſited in his Monument an eſtimable Treaſure.

CHAP. III.

Solomon's *glorious Acceſſion to the Throne of* Iſrael. *Cauſes* Adonijah Joab, *and* Shimei, *to be put to Death; and* Abiathar *to be depoſed from the Prieſthood, for their joint Concurrence, in endeavouring to obtain the Crown for his elder Brother. Marries the Daughter of the King of* Egypt. *Gives evident Tokens of his ſuperior Wiſdom and Power in divers Acts of Importance. But is at length ſhamefully drawn into Idolatry by the inordinate Love of Women.*

DAVID that eminent King of *Iſrael*, and Servant of the Moſt High God, having done Honour to his Crown by the ſignal Services he performed for his Country, and left behind him a remarkable Inſtance of ſingular Piety towards God, and Benevolence

(*b*) Buried at *Jeruſalem*. It is ſomewhat very unaccountable, that the particular Place of this Prince's Sepulchre, which both the *Chaldeans* and the *Romans*, at their ſacking of *Jeruſalem*, thought proper to ſpare, ſhould now be ſo entirely loſt that we cannot find the leaſt remains of it: the Book of Pſalms, however, are an eternal Monument of his moſt excellent genius, and redound more to his Glory than the moſt pompous Elegies; and the following Epitaph, which the author of the Eccleſiaſticus has conſecrated to his Memory, will remain when Braſs and Marble ſhall be no more.

"As the Fat is taken away from the Peace-offering, ſo was *David* choſen out of the People of *Iſrael*. He played with young Lions as with Kids, and with Bears as with Lambs; he ſlew a Giant when he was young, and took away Reproach from his People; for he called upon the moſt high Lord, and he gave Strength to his right Hand to ſlay the mighty Warrior, and to ſet up the Horn of his People. So the People honoured him with ten thouſands, and praiſed him in Bleſſings of the Lord; for he deſtroyed the Enemies on every ſide, and brought to nought the *Philiſtines*, his Adverſaries; in all his Works he praiſed the holy One moſt high, and bleſſed the Lord with Words of Glory; he ſet Singers alſo before the Altar, that by their Voices, they might make ſweet Melody, and daily ſing Praiſes in their Songs. He beautified their Feaſts, and ſet their ſolemn Times in perfect Order: the Lord took away his Sins, and exalted his Horn forever; he gave him a Covenant of Kings, and a Throne of Glory in *Iſrael*. *Eccleſ.* xlvii. 2. &c.

nevolence towards Mankind, was at length wafted through the gloomy Paſſage of Death to that World of Spirits, where Bliſs uninterrupted reigns for ever, and immortal Minds are rendered compleatly happy, by a total Deprivation of thoſe Paſſions which agitate the Fleſh, and are the inſeparable Companions of Mortality.

Solomon his Son aſcended the Throne of *Iſrael*, by the Decree of an overruling Providence, and the ſpecial Appointment of his deceaſed King and Father, and with the univerſal Acclamation of the People.

But *Adonijah*, who had made an Attempt upon the Government, during the Life of his Father, applied himſelf in an artful Addreſs to *Bathſheba*, the King's mother. She received him with great Courteſy, and with large Aſſurances of her Aſſiſtance in any thing that might be in her Power.

Upon this Encouragement he came preſently to his point, and thus beſpoke her. *Great Princeſs, I need not tell you, that if I were diſpoſed to be troubleſome upon the Turn of Government, the Right of Priority, and the Good-will of the People would be on my Side; but ſince it hath pleaſed God to devolve it upon your Son,* Solomon, *I am the King's humble Servant, and ſhall content myſelf with the Bounds of my preſent Condition.*

I have only one Thing to beg of you, which is, that you will be pleaſed to uſe your Intereſt with your Son, on my Behalf, that I may be permitted to take Abiſhag *to Wife.*

She lay by my Father David's *Side only to keep him warm in his extreme Decay of Heat, and undoubtedly he left her a Virgin as he found her.*

Bathſheba promiſed him the uttermoſt in her power, and encouraged him to hope for Succeſs; for *Solomon* ſhe doubted not, would moſt readily agree to the joint Requeſt of his Brother, and his Mother, in a greater Matter than this appeared to be.

This was a pleaſing Promiſe to *Adonijah* from *Bathſheba*, who went directly to her Son, to confer with him upon the Matter.

Solomon roſe up to meet his Mother, and taking her in his Arms, conducted her to his Bed-chamber, where he placed her on his Right-hand upon a Chair of State. *Bathſheba* was no ſooner ſeated, but ſhe preſently entered upon her Buſineſs, and thus addreſſed the King. *Son, I have an humbly Suit to lay before you, and it would trouble me not a little, if you ſhould refuſe it.*

The King inquired the Subſtance of it with apparent Suprize, as if there were any thing for her to ask, which a dutiful Child could deny to his Mother. He therefore intreated her to go on, and to depend upon his Readineſs to comply with her Deſire in any thing he could do.

Thus encouraged ſhe proceeded, *Son, I make it my Requeſt, that you will give* Abiſhag *in marriage to your Brother* Adonijah.

The King ſtarted at this Propoſal in a Surprize, and diſmiſſed his Mother with theſe Words. Adonijah *has more ambitious Deſigns in his Head than*

than the marrying of Abiſhag. *Why does he not ſpeak plain rather, and put in his Claim to the Kingdom, as elder Brother; which he might as honeſtly have done, and with the ſame Trouble.*

Firſt He deſires Abiſhag *in marriage; and then he has procured great Friends and intereſt to ſupport his pretenſions. Such as* Joab *the* General, Abiathar *the High-prieſt, and others.*

Solomon deliberating upon the preſent State of Things, (*c*) ſent *Benaiah*, the Captain of the Guard, with a Commiſſion forthwith to kill his Brother; and then calling for *Abiathar*, the High-prieſt, he told him, That though he had deſerved to die, yet in regard of the Services he had done his Father, and of the Part he bore in bringing back the Ark, his puniſhment ſhould be only Baniſhment. *Therefore*, ſays he, *Be gone immediately from this Place, and let mine Eyes never ſee you more. Betake yourſelf to your own Home; fix your Habitation in the Country, and there continue to the Day of your Death.*

You have been falſe to me in joining with Adonijah, *and for that Fault, this is your Sentence. You have made yourſelf unworthy of the Honour of the Prieſthood, and from this Time forward you ſhall exerciſe the Function no more.*

Abiathar thus diſmiſſed from the Sacerdotal Office, that Dignity devolved from the Houſe of *Ithamar* (as God had foretold to *Eli*, the Grandfather of *Abiathar*) into the Family of *Phineas*, being conferred on *Zadock*.

When *Joab* heard of the Death of *Adonijah*, conſcious of having cultivated his Friendſhip, and ſtudied his intereſt more than the King's, he had juſt Ground to expect the Reſentment of *Solomon*, to evade which he fled for Sanctuary to the Altar; not doubting but that the Veneration the King had for God, and for Holy Things, would be a Protection to him.

When the King came to underſtand that *Joab* had taken Sanctuary, he ſent *Benaiah* to cite him to a Court of Juſtice, to anſwer for what he had done: but he refuſed to quit the Altar, declaring, That if he muſt periſh, he would rather die there than in any other Place.

Benaiah carried his Anſwer to the King, who immediately ordered him to cut off his Head where he was, and as a juſt Puniſhment upon him for the deteſtable Murders of *Abner* and *Amaſa*, againſt all the Ties of Honour, Humanity and Juſtice, but gave it in Charge to *Benaiah*, to ſee his Body buried, for a Memorial to Poſterity of ſo execrable a Wicked-

(*c*) Sent *Benaiah*. It was formerly very cuſtomary among Princes, to employ their Officers, or greateſt Confidents, in ſuch like Executions. In *Dan.* ii. 24. we read, that Nebuchadnezzar *ſent* Arioh, *who was chief Commander of his Troops, to deſtroy the Wiſe Men of* Babylon, becauſe they could not interpret his Dream; and therefore we need the leſs Wonder, that we find *Solomon* employing *Benjamin*, Captain of his Guard in the like Office.

neſs, and likewiſe to acquit both himſelf and Father, of any Rigour in the Death of *Joab*.

Benaiah upon the Execution of this Commiſſion, was made General in *Joab*'s Place; and upon the depoſing of *Abiathar* the High-prieſt, the King aſſigned *Zadock* to ſucceed him.

Nor did *Shimei* eſcape his juſt Reſentment, for the King commanded him to build himſelf a houſe at *Jeruſalem*, and not to ſtir out of it, or to paſs the River *Kidron* upon the Peril of his Life; nay, he confirmed the ſolemn Sentence with exacting an Oath from *Shimei*, who, well ſatisfied with the Conditions, ſwore to the Obſervance of them. Hereupon he quitted his own Country, and came and dwelt at *Jeruſalem*.

About three Years after, it happened that two of *Shimei*'s Servants ran away from him; and the Maſter hearing that they were at *Gath*, (*d*) took a Journey thither, in order to fetch them back.

Upon his Return with his Servants the King received Intelligence of it, and highly incenſed at the Affront offered his regal Dignity in thus contemptuouſly tranſgreſſing the poſitive Command (even after ſo ſolemn an Oath on the obſervance of it) thus ſeverely chaſtiſed the Delinquent.

Shimei, didſt thou not ſwear to me, That thou wouldeſt never ſtir out of this City into any other, to the Day of thy Death? and like a falſe Wretch, thou hadſt now broken that ſacred Oath, and for that Perjury ſhalt die.

Take this for thy Inſtruction too, that divine Vengeance, ſooner or later finds out the Criminal; and that forbearance is ſo far from an Acquittal, that it aggravates the delayed Vengeance.

The Hand of God is in this Judgment upon thee, not only for thy late Perjury, but for thy Sins of ancient Date; I mean the Inſolences againſt my father in the Depth of his Diſtreſſes. Think of this, and remember that God is juſt.

Benaiah then put *Shimei* to Death by the King's Order.

Solomon not only aſcended the Throne of his Father *David* with great Glory and Splendour; but ſwayed the Royal Scepter without Controul.

He had puniſhed thoſe who arrogantly endeavoured to deprive him of his Government conciliated the uni-

(*d*) *Gath*. Theſe Servants were probably ſuch as he had purchaſed with a conſiderable Sum of Money, and their running away was not only a Loſs, but a great Affront likewiſe to their Maſter; and therefore partly out of Rage, and partly through Coveteouſneſs, he undertook this dangerous journey, preſuming, that a thing which might be done ſo ſecretly and ſpeedily, would never come to *Solomon*'s Ears; that in the ſpace of three Years Time, *Solomon* might have forgot his Injunction; or that if he remembered it, he would not be ſo rigid as to put it in Execution; eſpecially as he went not out of *Jeruſalem*, through wantonneſs, or any Contempt of Authority, but meerly to recover what he had loſt, which he might think was a Thing very excuſable.

verſal Affection of his People, and ſettled every Point neceſſary to general Happineſs.

In this Interval of profound Peace, both at Home and Abroad, he took to Wife the Daughter of the King of *Egypt*, apply'd himſelf to the Rebuilding the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, which he made much larger and ſtronger than they were before, and every other Buſineſs that could aggrandize his own Glory, and contribute to the Happineſs and Welfare of his People.

He was young, indeed, but want of Years prevented him not from doing Juſtice, or the Execution of the Laws, or paying a religious Reverence to the Authority of his dying Father's Precepts; for, in a Word, ſuch was the Pregnancy, even of his early Youth, that he ruled every Thing with a Judgment that might have become the moſt conſummated Experience.

Reflecting on the Goodneſs of the God of his Father in raiſing him to the Throne of *Iſrael*, and bleſſing him with Peace and Plenty, the Approbation and Love of his Subjects, with all that could contribute to his Happineſs, he thought himſelf bound to addreſs God by Prayer and Sacrifice, in Acknowledgment of theſe Mercies; thereupon he went to *Gibeon*, where he offered upon *Moſes*'s Brazen Altar, long ſince erected there, a thouſand Victims for a *(e)* Burnt-offering.

This Piety and Zeal was ſo acceptable to God, that the very Night following he appeared unto him in a Dream; and to ſhew him that the Services of his Heart and Good-will ſhould not go unrewarded, bad him aſk what he would and it ſhould be granted him.

Solomon pitched upon the greateſt and the moſt valuable Thing he could think of, and that which he concluded would be moſt agreeable to the approbation of the Giver, and at the ſame Time moſt advantageous to the Receiver. It was not Silver, nor Gold, nor any thing of thoſe Vanities to which Youthful Minds are generally attached, that he choſe as the only Thing worth asking; but he thus entreated the Lord, *Lord grant me a right Apprehenſion of Matters, and a ſound Judgment, that may enable me to govern this People according to Truth and Juſtice. (f)*

This Choice was ſo acceptable to

(*e*) A Thouſand Victims for a Burnt-offering. Without having recourſe to the many forced Solutions which have been made upon this Paſſage, I ſhall only obſerve, that there is not the leaſt Intimation given us, that all theſe Sacrifices were offered in one Day; and therefore it is doing no Injury to the ſacred Text to ſuppoſe, that this was one of the great Feſtivals which *Solomon* might think proper to hold at *Gibeon*, and that he continued there, until, by the daily Oblations, this Number of Burnt-offerings were conſumed.

(*f*) Juſtice. A very eminent Father of the *Greek* Church (*Gregory* de opificio homines, c. 13.) ſpeaking of the different Kinds of Dreams, has juſtly obſerved, that the Organs of our Body and our Brain, are not unlike the Strings of a muſical Inſtrument: while the Strings are ſcrewed up to a proper Pitch, they

God, that he not only promiſed him what he deſired, but Riches and Glory beſides, aſſuring him That he would confer upon him ſuch an exalted Degree of Underſtanding, and ſuch practical Wiſdom, as no Man, either public or private, could ever pretend to before him; and adding That upon Condition of his continuing juſt to the World, obedient in all Things to God, treading in the Steps, and imitating the eminent Virtues of his Father, the Government ſhould remain in his Family for many Ages.

Upon theſe Words he awoke, roſe out of his Bed, worſhipped, gave Thanks, and then returned to *Jeruſalem*, where he ſacrificed to God before the Tabernacle, and feaſted all his People.

About this Time there was a difficult Cauſe brought before him, which is particularly worthy of general Obſervation, as it diſplays the extraordinary Wiſdom and Juſtice of *Solomon*, and holds forth a ſhining Example to all ſucceeding Princes.

There came to the King two common Proſtitutes for Juſtice. The Plaintiff told her Tale, to this effect; *This Woman and I lived both in a Lodging, and it was our Fortune to be delivered each of us of a Male Child, on the ſame Day and Hour. Within three Days this Woman having overlaid her own Child, and ſmothered it, took mine ſoftly out of my Arms as I was aſleep, and laid her's in the Place of it.*

Early the next Morning when I was about to ſuckle my own Infant, the Child was not to be found but a dead one laid in the Place; for I know my own Child by moſt infallible Marks.

I have preſſed her for my Child; but ſhe keeps it from me, and bears me down that it is her Child ſtill, and I have no Witneſs to prove the contrary.

Now, Sir, I humbly beſeech your Majeſty to ſee Juſtice done betwixt us.

The King then addreſſed himſelf to the other Woman, demanding of her what ſhe had to alledge in her own Behalf. She anſwered, *She laid no ſuch Child there, but the living Child was her own, and ſo ſtood upon her Juſtification.*

The Attendants in general were

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they give an harmonious Sound, if touch'd by a ſkilful Hand; but as ſoon as they are relaxed, they give none at all. In like Manner, when we are awake, our Senſes, touched and directed by our Underſtanding, make an agreeable Concert; but when once we are aſleep, the Inſtrument has done ſounding, unleſs it be, that the Remembrance of what paſſed when we were awake, comes and preſents itſelf to the Mind, and ſo forms a Dream, juſt as the Strings of an Inſtrument will for ſome Time continue their Sound, even after the Hand of the Artiſt has left them.

The Application of this to *Solomon*'s Dream, is eaſy and natural; for as he had been praying the preceding Day with great Ardour and Fervency, God was pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf to the Eyes of his Underſtanding, and for the Confirmation of his Faith, to hold that Converſation with him, and whether we admit the *Father*'s Philoſophy on this Point or not, we cannot deny, that God has it in his Power to approach the Soul of Man, by many different Methods, and to actuate and operate upon it, in what Manner he pleaſes.

Divide

greatly dubious on whom to fix the Imputation of Injuſtice, till the King thought of this Expedient. He ordered the live Child to be brought, and one of his Guards to take his Sword, cut the Infant in half, juſt in the Middle, and (g) divide it betwixt the two pretended Mothers, half to the one, and half to the other.

This, at firſt, was deemed a very idle Stratagem, till one of the Women crying out earneſtly, and begging that her Companion might have the Child, and paſs for the Mother of it, provided that its Life might be ſpared, and ſhe have the Comfort of ſeeing it yet amongſt the Living.

The other Woman quietly ſubmitting to the Propoſal, and not without ſome ſeeming Satisfaction at the Calamity of her Neighbour; the King adjudged the Child to the right Woman upon the Evidence of her Tenderneſs, and natural Affection; highly condemning the Wickedneſs of the other, who, after that ſhe had killed her own Child, did what ſhe could to deſtroy that of her Neighbour.

This was ſo ſingular an Inſtance of the King's Wiſdom and Juſtice, that from that Day forward, the People honoured and obeyed him, as a Prince that acted by the Guidance and Direction of a divine Impulſe.

Solomon then proceeded to take a Liſt of his Officers, civil, military and eccleſiaſtical in his Provinces.

There was *Uri*, the Son of *Hur*, in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, including *Bethlehem*.

The Son of *Abinadab*, Son in Law to *Solomon*, and had the Command of *Dor*, and the Sea Coaſt.

The great Plain was under *Baana*, the Son of *Ahilud*, and ſo as far as to the River *Jordan*.

The Son of *Geber* had the Government of the *Gileadites*, as far as Mount *Lebanon*: within which Command there were ſixty large and well fortified Cities.

Abinadab, that married *Baſmath*, another of *Solomon*'s Daughters, had the Government of *Mahanaine*, which comprehends all *Galilee* up to *Sidon*.

Under *Baanah* was the Government of the Sea Coaſt about *Aſher*.

Jehoſaphat commanded the Mountains *Iſſadar*, and all the Lower *Galilee*, to the farther Side of *Jordan*.

The whole Country of the *Benja-*

(g) Divide it. *Abarbinal*, the *Jewiſh* Commentator, is of Opinion, that *Solomon*, by obſerving very attentively the Countenance and Behaviour of the two Women, made a Diſcovery of the Truth antecedent to this Experiment, and that his afterwards commanding the Child to be divided, was only to notify to the Company what he had before diſcovered. Be this as it may, it no Ways depreciates the Deciſion itſelf; for though *Solomon* might from his own Obſervations have diſcovered the true Mother, yet the reſtoring the Child to her upon the meer Strength of ſuch Obſervations, would not have been near ſo ſatisfactory and convincing to the Bye-ſtanders, as this Method was, which we are afterwards told produced Joy and Admiration in the Hearts of all who were preſent.

mites was under the Government of *Shimei*.

And the Land beyond *Jordan* was under *Tabar*.

Theſe were *Solomon's* Governors, and he had one Lieutenant General to ſuperintend them all.

So ſoon as the People found themſelves ſettled in a State of Peace and Plenty, and out of Fear of any Diſtractions by War or Tumult, they gave themſelves up to Husbandry and Improvements; and in a ſhort Time advanced their Fortunes and Poſſeſſions (the Tribe of Judah eſpecially) to the Aſtoniſhment of the World.

The King had likewiſe other Officers over the Aſſyrians, and other Barbarous Nations, between *Egypt* and *Euphrates*, to whom he committed the Care of his Subſidies, thoſe People being Tributaries to him.

The daily Proportion of Proviſions that theſe People furniſhed every Day for the King's own Table and Entertainment, was thirty * Chomers of fine Flower, threeſcore Chomers of meal, ten fat Oxen, twenty Oxen out of the Paſtures, and a hundred fat Lambs, beſide Deer, Birds, Fiſh, Game in vaſt Abundance.

He had ſo prodigious a Number of Chariots, that there were forty thouſand Stalls provided for the Horſes that belonged to them, over and above twenty thouſand Horſemen that were of his Guards; one Half being quartered in *Jeruſalem*, near his Perſon, and the other Half diſtributed into Out-Villages, near the City; and the ſame Officer that was Commiſſary for the Expence of the King's Table, was appointed alſo to provide Neceſſaries for the King's Houſe wherever he went.

The Wiſdom of *Solomon* proceeding immediately from the Fountain of Knowledge, and Origin of all Science, was ſo far ſuperior to the Philoſophy and higheſt Attainments of the moſt learned of his Cotemporaries, that his Pre-eminence was acknowledged by the moſt renouned Scholars, both among the *Egyptians* and *Hebrews*.

This extraordinary Prince compoſed three thouſand Proverbs, and his Songs were a thouſand and five.

He wrote the Hiſtory of Plants, from the Cedar to the Hyſſop; alſo of Cattle and Beaſts of the Earth; Water-Fowl, and Birds of the Air; for he underſtood the Nature of all theſe Creatures, and ſtudied and refined upon their reſpective Properties and Diſpoſitions.

Nor did he only know and underſtand (by a Gift from above) but likewiſe improve his Knowledge and Underſtanding of theſe Things, for the Help and Benefit of Mankind, even to the Confuſion of evil Spirits.

When the Fame of *Solomon's* Wiſ-

* A Chomer, or Côre, contained about ſix hundred and five Pints *Engliſh* Meaſure; thirty of which amounted to eighteen thouſand, one hundred aad fifty *Engliſh* Pints, and threeſcore to thirty ſix thouſand and three hundred. This Word in Scripture is tranſlated Meaſures.

dom

dom reached the Ears of *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, who had ever retained the warmeſt Affection for his Father *David*; that Prince ſent an Embaſſy to congratulate him on his Succeſſion to the Throne of *Iſrael*, and on the favourable Preſage of his future Proſperity, expreſſing at the ſame, the moſt ardent Deſign that the Government might long continue in the Family. *Solomon* received the Ambaſſadory very cordally, and diſpatched by them the following Addreſs, to the King their Maſter.

King *Solomon* to King *Hiram*, greeting.

BE it known unto thee, O King, that my Father David *had it a long Time in his Mind and Purpoſe to build a Temple to the Lord; but being perpetually in War, and under a neceſſity of clearing his hands of his Enemies, and make them all his Tributaries, before he could attend this great and holy Work, he hath left it to me in a Time of Peace both to begin and to finiſh it, according to the Direction, as well as the Prediction, of Almighty God. Bleſſed be his great Name for the preſent Tranquility of my Dominions; by his gracious Aſſiſtance, I ſhall now dedicate the beſt Improvements of this Liberty and Leiſure to his Honour and Worſhip; wherefore I make it my Requeſt, that you will let ſome of your People to go with ſome Servants of mine to Mount* Lebanon, *to aſſiſt them in cutting down Materials towards this Building; for the* Sydonians *underſtand it much better than we do. As for the Workmen's Wages, whatever you think reaſonable, ſhall be punctually paid them.*

Hiram was wonderfully pleaſed with *Solomon's* Letter, and returned him the following Anſwer:

King *Hiram* to King *Solomon*.

NOTHING could have been more welcome to me, than to underſtand that the Government of your pious Father is devolved, by God's Providence, into the Hands of ſo excellent, ſo wiſe and ſo virtuous a Succeſſor; his holy Name be praiſed for it. That which you write for, ſhall be done with all Care and Good-will; for I will give Order to cut down, and to export ſuch Quantities of the faireſt Cedars and Cypreſs-trees, as you ſhall have occaſion for. My People ſhall bring them to the Sea-ſide for you, and from thence ſhip them away to what Port you pleaſe, where they may lie ready for your Men to tranſport them to Jeruſalem. *It would be a great Obligation, after all this, to allow us ſuch a Proviſion of Corn in Exchange, as may ſuit your Convenience; for that is the Commodity we Iſlanders want moſt.*

When King *Solomon* had received and peruſed the Contents of *Hiram's* Letter; he was pleaſed with the Benevolence of Diſpoſition and Goodneſs of Heart therein diſplayed; that as a Token of his Eſteem and Reſpect, he ordered him a yearly Preſent of two thouſand Chomers of Wheat, two thou-

thouſand Veſſels of Oil, and as many of Wine, of ſeventy two Quarts apiece. This was the firſt Earneſt of Friendſhip betwixt the two Kings, which continued to Increaſe to the laſt, every Day firmer and ſtronger.

The King ordered his People to provide him thirty Thouſand Workmen, which he diſpoſed of in ſuch an eaſy Method, that their Labour ſhould not be grevious to them.

The Number of them was thirty Thouſand, and their Poſt was to do Duty for one Month, by ten thouſand at a Time, in cutting down Wood upon Mount *Libanon*, and to be relieved at the Month's End by the ſecond ten thouſand, and the ſecond, after another Month, by the third; ſo that they had two mouth's Liberty to be at their own Homes; and thus in a Circle, every fourth Month, each ten thouſand were to take their Turn over again. Their Inſpector General, or Super-intendent, was *Adoniram*.

Beſides theſe, there were ſeventy thouſand Foreigners, formerly deſigned by *David*, for the carrying of Stones and other Meterials; eighty thouſand Stone Cutters and Maſons, and three thouſand and three hundred overſeers of the Work.

Their order was to made Uſe of the largeſt Stones they could get for the Foundation, and to have them ſquared and ready wrought upon the Mountains where they grew, and thence to be carried whole to *Jeruſalem*, in which Injunction *Hiram*'s Men were concerned as well as the reſt.

Solomon was now in the fourth Year of his Reign, when he began this mighty Work; and of that Year the ſecond Month, which the *Macedonians* called *Artemiſius*, and the *Hebrews Zif*; four hundred and eighty Years from the *Iſraelites* coming out of *Egypt*. A thouſand and twenty Years from *Abrahams* coming out of *Meſopotamia* into the Land of *Canaan*; fourteen hundred and forty from the Deluge; and from the Creation of the World, three thouſand one hundred and two. It was alſo in the eleventh Year of *Hiram*, the King of *Tyre*; and two hundred and forty Years after the Building of that City.

Joſephus, in his Deſcription of the Temple, ſays, "The Foundation was laid prodigiouſly deep; and the Stones not only of the largeſt Size, but hard and firm enough to the Aſſault of Wind and Rain; beſide, that they were ſo wrought one in another, and wedged in the Rock, that the Strength and Curioſity of the Baſis was not leſs admirable than the Bulk and Ornament of the intended Superſtructure, and one was in all Reſpects anſwerable to the Beauty and Magnificience of the other.

The Walls were all of a white Stone from the Ground to the Cieling. The Height of the Building was ſixty Cubits,* the Length as much, and

* A *Jewiſh* Cubit, according to *Calmet*, was near twenty to *Engliſh* Inches, ſixty Cubits therefore muſt amount to ſomething more than an hundred and nine Feet; that is thirty ſix Yards and a Foot.

the Breadth twenty; over which there was another Stage of the ſame Dimenſions; ſo that the whole Height of the Building, from Bottom to Top, was a hundred and twenty Cubits, and it looked toward the Eaſt.

The Porch, or Court next to the Entrance, was twenty Cubits in Length, to anſwer the Temple; ten in a Breadth, and a hundred and twenty Cubits in Length.

There was built round about it, and againſt the outward Walls, like ſo many Buttreſſes to ſupport it, thirty Cells, or little Houſes, in the Form of Galleries opening one into another.

The Length and Breadth of theſe Cells was five and twenty Cubits each, and the Height twenty. And there were two other Floors over this, of the ſame Make and Proportion, amounting all together to the juſt Height of the lower Part of the Fabrick: for theſe Cells or Galleries went no higher than the Top of the firſt Story.

They were all cieled with Cedar, and every Partition had it its Covering apart, independant one of another; they were all likewiſe faſtened together, by long and large Beams, in ſuch a manner that they looked but like one Piece, and as if the very Walls were the ſtronger for them.

Under theſe Beams were ſeveral curious Varieties of Carving and Fret Work, Gilding, &c. The Walls all wainſcoted with Cedar, and ſo adorned with Works in Gold, to make the moſt ſplendid Appearance imaginable.

The whole Frame, was riſed upon Stones, poliſhed to the higheſt Degree of Perfection, and ſo artificially conſtructed, that there was no Joint to be diſcerned, not the leaſt ſign of a Hammer, or of any working Tool; all Things being ſo adjuſted and accommodated, one Piece to another beforehand, that upon the whole it look'd more like the Work of Providence and Nature, than the product of Art or human Invention.

As the ſecond Story had not a large Door to it at the eaſt End, as the lower had, but only ſome ſmall Doors to enter at, from the Sides above, *Solomon* contrived a Pair of winding ſtairs to be cut through the Wall, for a Paſſage to the upper Part. The inſide of the Temple was lined with Cedar; and the binding of the Timber together with ſtrong Irons, added greatly to the Building.

The King cauſed it to be laid in two Diviſions; that is to ſay, the inner Part or holy of Holies, of twenty Cubits ſquare, which was inacceſſible; and the other of forty Cubits, which was aſſigned to the Uſe and Service of the Prieſt. In the Partition Wall, betwixt the inner and outward Parts of the Temple, he built large Cedar Doors, which were richly gilt, and exquiſitely carved, beſide choice Subjects of Nature and Hiſtory, embroidered upon a hanging Veil before it, of rich Silks and fine Linnen, interwoven with beautiful Flowers, and the Colours all in Perfection.

Solomon cauſed alſo to be formed two Cherubims of maſſy Gold, which he dedicated to God in the holy Place, being each of them five Cubits high, and two Wings, each of them of five Cubits in length; which being ſtretched out, one touched the Southſide, and the other the North; and with their other two Wings, they met one another, over-ſpreading the holy Ark in the Middle. Theſe Cherubims ſurpaſſed all Deſcription. The very Floor of the Temple was overlaid with beaten Gold, the Doors very large, and proportion'd to the Height of the Walls, twenty Cubits broad, and ſtill Gold upon Gold.

In ſhort this ſuperb Edifice might be deemed a Compoſition of all that is valuable in Nature, as there was a curious Curtain, put up at this Gate, as at the other, but none at the Entrance into the Porch.

It having been reported to King *Solomon*, that there lived at *Tyre*, a Man named *Hiram* eminent for his extraordinary Skill in Workmanſhip upon Gold, Silver and other Metals, being ſuperior in his Art to the whole Fraternity. His Mother was of the Tribe of *Naphthali*, and his Father, by Extraction, an *Iſraelite*. He ſent for this Man from *Tyre*, and employed him in his Buſineſs, and whenſoever *Solomon* had any thing to do that was difficult or curious, it was performed by *Hiram*.

He caſt him two brazen hollow Pillars of four Fingers thick in the Metal, eighteen Cubits high, and twelve in Circumference; two Chapiters of Braſs on the Tops of the two Pillars, five Cubits each.

Theſe were covered with a kind of Braſs Net Work; and below them were Flowers or Lilly Work of the ſame Contrivance, with two Rows of Pomegranates hanging down, a hundred in each Row. Theſe two Pillers he placed in the Entrance of the Porch; one on the Right Hand, which he called *Jachin*, and the other on the left, which he called *Boaz*.

He made a Veſſel alſo of molten Braſs, ſomewhat after the Figure of a Globe, cut off in the Middle, which for the largeneſs of it he called his Sea.

It was made Goblet Faſhion; the Diameter ten Cubits, from Side to Side, four Fingers thick, with a twiſted Pillar of one Cubit over, under the Middle of it for a Supporter.

Around this Pillar were placed the Figure, of twelve Bulls, or Oxen; facing it, by three and three, the four principal Quarters of Eaſt, Weſt North and South. They ſtood in a Poſition lower behind than before, which was both a Support to the Weight, and kept it firm and ſteddy.

This Sea, or Veſſel, held three thouſand Baths, reckoning every Bath at about ten *Engliſh* Pottles.

Hiram made alſo ten Baſes of Braſs of an oblong Square, and all of the ſame Form and Dimenſions; that is, five Cubits in Length, each of them, four in Breadth, and ſix in Height.

The

The ſeveral Pieces were caſt apart, and then put together after this Manner:

There were four Pillars, or underſetters, one to the Corner of every Baſe, which were ſo incorporated with the reſt of the Work, that they ſerved not only to uphold the Weight, but to keep the Side tight one to another.

Upon the Squares, were the Figures of a Lion, a Bull, and an Eagle &c, Images were alſo placed upon the Pillars, and upon the Plates of the Borders.

The whole Work was mounted upon four Wheels, a Cubit and an Half over, all of Caſt Work; Nave-Spokes, and every Thing belonging to it; the Whole was executed with amazing Accuracy and Symmetry.

The Angels were formed with embоſſed Work of Shoulders, and Paws of Lions, and Talents of Eagles; with Reſts or Lodges of Rail upon them to receive the Laver; but ſo artifically fitted to the Fingers of thoſe Creatures, as they were repreſented upon the Pannels, together with Branches of Palm-trees intermixed upon the ſame Piece, that every Thing looked as natural Life.

Such was the Structure of the ten Baſes; and to theſe Baſes he made ten Lavers of the ſame Metal, and of an oval Form, each containing forty Baths; the Height four Cubits, and the Diameter as much.

Theſe ten Lavers were ſet upon as many Baſes, which in their Language they called *Mechenoth*. They were all placed in the Temple; five of them on the Left-hand, at the North Side; and the other five at the South Side, on the right, looking toward the Eaſt. In the ſame Place ſtood likewiſe the brazen Sea. They were all fill'd with Water; the Sea for the Uſe of the Prieſts to waſh their Hands and Feet with, upon entering the Sanctuary, before they went up to the Altar; and the reſt of the Lavers for cleaning of the Intrails, and other Parts of Burnt-offerings.

He erected moreover a brazen Altar of twenty Cubits in Length, as many over, and ten in Depth, providing all the Veſſels thereunto belonging of the ſame Stuff; as Boilers, Water-pots, Fleſh-hooks, &c. He dedicated alſo a great Number of Tables, and one of pure Gold for the Shew-bread, larger than the Reſt. But there were many others of ſeveral Forms and Sizes, not much inferior to that for the Shew-bread, and ſufficient to hold twenty thouſand golden Cups and Veſſels, and twice the Number of Silver ones.

He made a Proviſion likewiſe of twelve thouſand Candleſtick, according to the Appointment of *Moſes*; and one of them to be applied by a peculiar Dedication to the Service of the Temple, and there to be kept with Light in them, burning Day and Night, after the Direction of the Law.

The Table for the Shewbread was placed on the North Side, overagainſt the Candleſtick which ſtood on the South. Betwixt theſe two was the Golden Altar.

This was all in the fore Part of the Temple

Temple of forty Cubits, and a Partition Veil betwixt that and the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was to be kept.

Solomon likewiſe cauſed to be made fourſcore thouſand Wine Cups, and ten thouſand Golden Veſſels, and Goblets of other Sorts and Faſhions, and twice as many Silver ones.

Plates and Diſhes of Gold were made to ſteep the Flour in upon the Altar, eighty thouſand; and of Silver double the Number. Alſo Golden Meaſure, ſuch as the Moſaical Hin * and Aſſaron, twenty thouſand; as many more of Silver.

There were twenty thouſand Golden Cenſers for Incenſe, and fifty thouſand others to carry Fire from the great Altar to the little one within the Temple.

This mighty Prince provided and a thouſand Prieſt Habits; ſuch as Robes, Ephods, Suits of precious Stones, &c. but there was but one Crown with *Moſes*'s Inſcription of God upon it.

There were alſo Silken Veſts, and Purple Girdles for the Prieſts, ten thouſand of each; two hundred thouſand Trumpets, according to the Inſtitution of *Moſes*, and as many Silken Stoles for the Levites that chaunted the Holy Hymns, beſide four hundred thouſand Muſical Inſtruments: as Harps, Pſalteries, and the like, which were made of a mixt Metal betwixt Gold and Silver, to accompany the Voices.

In ſhort, neither Expence nor Labour was ſpared to complete the Strength and Magnificence of this ſtupendous Structure; which long remained a Monument of the Founder's Zeal for the Honour of God, and his holy Worſhip.

When the preparatory Part was over, the Church Stuff was depoſited in the holy Treaſury, and ſet apart for Religious Uſes.

The Temple itſelf was fenced with an Encloſure of three Foot in Height [in Hebrew Giſon] to keep out the Laity from entering into a Place where only the Prieſts were to be admitted.

Beyond this Partition was another ſquare Court or Building, with large Portico's or Galleries about it, and four ſtately Gates, that opened Eaſt, Weſt, North and South; the Doors all plated and inlaid with Gold. This Place was common to all People, provided they came thither with that Purity of Preparation and legal Qualification which Law required.

The outward Building was ſupurb beyond Expreſſion, and arduous beyond Conception, there were Hollows filled up, which from their Depth, might be deemed the Work of Ages; yet theſe were levelled in Order to be a Foundation for this aſtoniſhing Fabrick.

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* The Hin, according to *Calmet*, contained ſomething more than ten *Engliſh* Pints. The Aſſaron was the equal with the Gomer, or Omer. And according to the aforeſaid Author, contained ſomething more than ſix of our Pints.

The

The Port was encompaſs'd again with a kind of double Cloiſter, and two rows of Pillars to ſupport it, every Pillar being cut whole out of the Rock. The Doors were all Silver-work; the Roof Fretwork, and the Wainſcotting all of Cedar.

This curious Edifice, was completed in the ſhort Space of ſeven Years; and it is difficult to determine, which moſt demands our Admiration; the Magnitude, Sumptuouſneſs, and Splendor of the Work itſelf; or the ſhortneſs of the Time in which it was effected; as the Buſineſs of Ages was tranſacted within the narrow Compaſs of a Few Years.

The mighty Underſtanding being now brought to Perfection, *Solomon* wrote to all the Elders of *Iſrael*, and the heads of the Tribes, to ſummon the People up to *Jeruſalem* to ſee the Temple, and to aſſiſt in tranſporting thither the Ark of the Covenant.

The Reſolution was duly notified and in the ſeventh Month, which was called *Ethanim*, with much Difficulty they were convened.

In this Month was the feaſt of Tabernacles, which among the *Iſraelites* was accounted the moſt ſacred and ſolemn of their Feſtivals. So the Prieſts took up the Ark, and *Moſes*'s Tabernacle, with the holy Veſſels belonging to the Altar, and carrying them all into the Temple. The King, and the whole Congregation, with the Levites, marching before them, with their Sacrifices and Oblations, ſprinkling the Ground, as they paſſed, with their Blood, and perfuming the Air with the Fragrancy of Incence and ſweet Odours, to ſuch a Degree, that people were ſenſible of it at a Diſtance, and reflected upon the delicacy of the Breath they drew, as no leſs than a celeſtial Influence inferring from that agreeable Alteration, that God himſelf had deſcended from Heaven to conſecrate the Temple that was newly built, and dedicated to himſelf, and therein to take up his Abode. For though the whole congregation came ſinging and dancing all the Way to the Temple, they went on freſh and cheerfully to their Journey's End.

This was the Manner of their tranſporting the Ark.

On their Approach to the Holy of Holies, where it was to be depoſited the People withdrew, and the Prieſts only that brought it, carried it into the Oracle, and there placed it under the Figures of the two Cherubims that were repreſented with the Points of their Wings touching one another, which looked like a kind of Cover and protection to the Ark, that was under them.

The Ark contained nothing more than the two Tables of Stone, on which were engraved the Ten Commandments, as God delivered them upon *Mount Sinai*.

The Candleſtick, Table and Golden Altar, ſtood in the ſame Order in the Sanctuary, as they did at firſt in the Tabernacle, when they offered their daily Sacrifices.

The Brazen Altar was placed directly againſt the Door, for the better View of the magnificience of the

Worſhip on the other Side; and then the reſt of the holy Utenſils and Veſſels, were all laid up together in the Temple.

The Ark being fixed with the utmoſt Order and Solemnity, and the Prieſts withdrawn from the ſacred Spot, there deſcended a Cloud, which ſo filled and darkened the Place, that they could hardly ſee. It reſembled not an heavy lowering Sky, but a mild Dew, and ſeemed to intimate the Divine Approbation of the pious Work in which they were engaged; and alſo to portend that the Almighty would vouchſafe to dwell there as a Place peculiarly devoted to his Honour and Worſhip.

While the people were contemplating on the Mighty event, *Solomon* ſtood up, and with a grace and Majeſty, becoming the Dignity of the Subject and Occaſion, addreſſed himſelf in a ſhort Prayer to Almighty God, in Words to this Effect,

O Lord, thou that inhabiteſt Eternity, and haſt raiſed out of nothing the mighty Fabrick of this Univerſe; the Heavens, the Air, the Earth, and the Sea; thou that filleſt the whole, and every thing that is in it, and art thyſelf unbounded and incomprehenſible; look down graciouſly upon thy Servant that have preſumed to erect a Temple here to the honour of thy great Name.

Lord hear our Prayers, and receive our Sacrifices; thou that art every where, vouchſafe alſo to be with us; thou that ſeeſt and heareſt all Things, look down from thy Throne in Heaven, and give ear to our Supplications in this Place; thou that never faileſt to aſſiſt thoſe that call upon thee Night and Day, and love and ſerve thee as they ought to do, have mercy upon us.

Having thus humbly addreſſed the God of *Iſrael* in Prayer and Supplication, the King turning himſelf to the people, reminding them of the wonderful Things that had been revealed to his Father *David* in Dreams and Viſions; ſome of which had been accompliſhed, and others were yet to come, concerning himſelf, his Name, his Succeſſion to the Throne his Building of the Temple, the Eſtabliſhment of the family, and the Welfare and Proſperity of the Nation.

Now ſays he, *a great Part of theſe Predictions being already verified, you are to thank God, not only for the Comforts you enjoy, but for the good Things alſo that are further promiſed, and to look upon the former only as the Earneſt of greater Bleſſings.*

After the ſpeaking of theſe words the King turned his Eye again toward the Temple, and thus addreſſed the Divine Majeſty.

O Lord, what are the moſt glorious Works of Man, in Compariſon, even with the ſmalleſt of thy Benefits and Mercies? Or what can we that have nothing to give, pretend to offer thee that wanteſt nothing, when the very leaſt of thy Bounties are above and beyond all Requital?

We can only render thee Praiſe, Acknowledgment, and Thankſgiving; and that indeed is a Perogative that thou haſt vouchſafed to Mankind above all other Creatures; ſo that this I am

not

not only allowed, but obliged to do, in the Name of myſelf, my Family, and the whole People of Iſrael, for all thy multiplyed Favours and infinite Goodneſs towards us.

As we have no other Way of expreſſing our Duty and Affections, than by Means of bare empty Words, that are only Air, be pleaſed to accept of our humble Gratitude. Firſt, For thy gracious Goodneſs to my Father, in raiſing him from a Shepherd's Crook, to an imperial Scepter. Next, for making good to myſelf all thy Promiſes and Predictions in my Favour.

Lord continue thy Bounties to us, as to thy choſen People. Preſerve, proſper, and perpetuate the Government to our Family, by a conſtant Train of Succeſſions from Generation to Generation, according to thy Promiſes to my Father, living and dying.

Do thou, O Lord grant us all this; and to all mine, the Virtues and the Grace that may make them acceptable in thy Sight.

I do further moſt humbly beſeech thee, to let thy Holy Spirit deſcend upon this Temple, in the Bleſſing of thy peculiar Preſence. Heaven and Earth I know are too little for thy Majeſty and Glory; and much more the Workmanſhip of Mens Hands, in a Fabric of Wood and Stone; and yet I cannot but preſume to implore thy Providence and Protection over it.

O Almigbty Lord, preſerve it from the Power and Rage of Enemies; and be pleaſed to take Care of it, as thy own Property and Poſſeſſion: and if at any Time hereafter thou ſhalt be moved in thy juſt Diſpleaſure to puniſh this People for their Tranſgreſſions, with Famine, Peſtilence, or any other Judgment, according to the Degree of their Wickedneſs, Lord, be pleaſed upon their humble Supplications to thee in thine own Houſe, with Prayers and Tears, for Mercy and Forgiveneſs, and to remove thy Judgment.

This I beſeech thee, not for the Iſraelites alone, but for the Relief indifferently of all People whatſoever, that ſhall offer up their Petitions to thee in this holy Place. By this Means it will appear to the whole World, that this is thy Houſe, and we thy People; and that the Iſraelites are not ſo inhuman, as to envy Strangers, the common Diſpenſations of the Author and Fountain of all our Happineſs.

After this humble and affectionate Prayer for the divine Bleſſing on his Work, *Solomon* caſt himſelf upon the Ground, and, after a ſhort Continuance, in that Poſture of Adoration, he roſe and offered Sacrifices in abundance; having the Satisfaction alſo of an Aſſurance, by a Token from God, that his Oblations were accepted; for there fell a Flaſh of Fire from Heaven, that ſhot through the air directly down to the Altar, and conſumed the Offerings.

This Prodigy being ſeen by the whole Multitude, they all looked upon it as certain Sign of God's owning both the Worſhip and the Temple, which filled thoſe with exceeding Joy, that they all fell down together, and unanimouſly joined in Praiſe and Adoration.

Solomon continued his Praiſes and Thankſgivings, perſuading and encouraging

couraging the Multitude to do the like, for ſo clear an Evidence of God's ſpecial Favour toward them.

The King charged the People to be inſtant with God in Prayer, for the Continuance of his Goodneſs and Graces to them, that they might live in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, without any Spot or Blemiſh, and walk in the Steps, and according to the divine Traditions of *Moſes*, to their Lives End. This being the ſure and only Way to render the *Iſraelites* the happieſt People of all Mortals.

He reminded them alſo, that there Felicity was no way to be ſecured and augmented, but by the Means by which it was acquired, as being not only the Effect, but the Reward of Piety and Juſtice. And further added, That it was much eaſier to get what they wanted, than to keep what they had got; admoniſhing them to beware, leſt they forfeited, by any Miſdemeanor, what they had gained by their Virtue.

The King having finiſhed his ſolemn Charge, diſmiſſed the Aſſembly, after he had offered up in Sacrifice for himſelf and his People, twelve thouſand Calves, and a Hundred and twenty thouſand Lambs.

This was the firſt Blood that was ſpilt in the Temple; and the *Iſraelites*, with their Wives and Children, were all feaſted at it.

There was celebrated at the ſame Time before the Temple, beſides this Solemnity, the Feaſt of Tabernacles, which laſted fourteen Days at the King's Expence, with great Magnificence and Splendour.

The various Ceremonies on this Occaſion, being performed with that Solemnity, which was requiſite; every Man was now returning to his Habitation; but not without making infinite Acknowledgements of the King's Wiſdom, Care, and Bounty in all Reſpects, and Prayers for his long Life, and the Continuance of the People under the Bleſſing of his Government.

They went back, ſinging, rejoicing, and giving Glory to God, and their Hearts were ſo elated with the Tranſaction, in which they had been engaged, and the manifeſt Tokens they had received of the divine Favour and Approbation, that they proceeded on their Way with Alacrity and Chearfulneſs, without the leaſt Senſe of Fatigue or Danger.

The Ark being now depoſited in the Temple and the beauty and magnificence of that glorious Structure, with all due Ceremony and Solemnity ſet forth, the Congregation diſperſed, and returned Home, when God appeared a ſecond Time to *Solomon* in his Sleep, and a Voice told him, *That God had accepted his Sacrifices, and heard his Prayers; that he would preſerve his Temple, and make it the Houſe of his dwelling; ſo long as he himſelf, and his Poſterity and People ſhould continue to walk before him, as* David *his Father did, in Pureneſs of Heart; promiſing him, upon that Condition, to advance him to the higheſt Degree of earthly Bliſs; to perpetuate*

tuate the Throne of Iſrael *to his Family; ſo that there ſhould never want a Prince of that Line, and of the Tribe of* Judah, *to ſway the Scepter of* Iſrael.

But, on the other Hand, if ever they ſhould depart from, or forget the Worſhip they profeſſed, and run after ſtrange Gods, they ſhould be quite rooted out from off the Face of the Earth, and Iſrael *be no longer a People: but after being torn to Pieces, and broken with Wars, and other Calamities at Home, be forced to ſhift for themſelves in the wide World, as Vagrants and Exiles.*

And the Voice further told him, *That in Caſe of ſuch an Apoſtacy, his new erected Fabric ſhould, with the Divine Permiſſion be ſacked and burned by the Hands of Barbarians, and* Jeruſalem *itſelf laid in Rubiſh and Aſhes, by a mercileſs Enemy; inſomuch that the People ſhould ſtand amazed at the very Report of ſo incredible a Miſery and Diſtreſs, and be wondering one to another how it ſhould come to paſs, that a People who were but Yeſterday the Envy of all Mankind, for Riches, external Glory, and Reputation, ſhould now on a ſudden be ſunk and loſt to the laſt Degree of Wretchedneſs and Contempt, and reduced to this deſpicable State too by the ſame Hand that raiſed them.*

To which Queſtion their own guilty Conſciences ſhall make this Anſwer. We have forſaken our God, we have abandoned our Religion of our Fore-fathers, and of our Country. And all this is juſtly befallen us for our Sins.

This was the Subſtance of *Solomon's* Dream, or Viſion, as it is tranſmitted to us by the ſacred Hiſtorian.

When this magnificent Structure was raiſed and conſecrated to the Divine Worſhip and Service, *Solomon* entered upon the Building of a Royal Palace for himſelf, which was full thirteen Years in perfecting.

He was not ſo ſolicitous and Intent upon the latter, as the former, which in Truth was great and artificial to a Miracle; and without God's peculiar Bleſſing and Aſſiſtance, could not have been compleated in that Compaſs of Years.

Solomon's Court indeed was an Appearance much inferior to the Majeſty of his Temple, not only for Want of Time to provide his Materials, but becauſe it was deſigned only for the Honour and Convenience of a temporal Prince, and the other dedicated to the KING of Kings; ſo that the Work was longer in finiſhing.

However, it was ſufficient to anſwer the End for which it was deſigned, being a Work that redounded much to the Glory both of the Prince and People.

But in this Place it may neither be unprofitable nor unentertaining, to recite an Account of the Model and Diſpoſition of this ſtupendous Fabrick.

There was erected, upon ſeveral Rows of Pillars, a ſpacious Pile of Building, in the Nature of a common Hall, for the Hearing of Cauſes. It was a hundred Cubits in Length

fifty in Breadth, and thirty in Depth; nor could it well be leſs, to receive the vaſt Multitudes that came thronging thither from all Parts for Juſtice.

It was ſupported by ſixteen ſquare Columns, covered with Corinthian Work in Cedar, and fortified with double Doors curiouſly wrought, that ſerved both for the Security and the Ornament of the Place.

In the Middle of this Court, or Hall, was another Edifice of thirty Cubits ſquare, and under-ſet with ſtrong Pillars, in which Quarter was a Throne of State, where the King himſelf uſed to ſit perſonally in Judgment.

Adjoining to this Royal Court of Juſtice, was the Queen's Houſe, and other Apartments, for Diverſion and Retreat, after the Fatigue of Buſineſs, all fitted up with Cedar, and raiſed upon huge Stones, of ten Cubits ſquare, which were partly plain, and in part overlaid with the moſt precious Marble, after the Faſhion of the moſt magnificent Palaces of Temples.

The Rooms were hung with three Depths of rich Hangings, and beautified with Images, in Sculpture, of Trees, Plants, Branches, Leave, &c. and all ſo marvellouſly wrought, that they appeared to the Eye to be all in Motion.

The Remainder of the Space up to the Cieling, was all ſet out with delicate parti-coloured Figures, upon White Ground; and beſide theſe, there was a great Variety of other Chambers for Retirement or Delight; long and large Galleries; vaſt Rooms of State, and others for Feaſting and Entertainment, elegantly adorned, with coſtly Furniture and Gildings; beſide which, all the Services for the King's Table were of Pure Gold.

It would be endleſs to give a particular Account of this mighty Building, which comprehend ſuch an infinite Diverſity of Chambers and Offices, great and ſmall; ſome under Ground, others above, as Vaults, Terrets, and the like.

In a Word, The whole Houſe was compoſed of white Marble, Cedar, Gold, and Silver, with precious Stones, intermingled upon the Walls or Cielings, after the Manner of the adorning of the Temple.

There was alſo erected a very fair, large Ivory Throne, with delicate carved Work and engraven upon it, after the Faſhion of a Tribunal. There were ſix Steps that led up to it. The Figure of a Lion at each End of every Step, and two Lions above; that is, one on either Hand of the State.

As the King reſted upon his Throne, there were Arms put forth, as in a Readineſs to take Care of him, and to receive him; and the Figure of a Bullock placed in a proper Poſture under him for his Support. The whole Piece being covered with Gold.

The two magnificent Structures were twenty Years in finiſhing. And *Hiram* King of *Tyre*, contributed to the mighty Work. It was a huge Maſs

Maſs of Gold, and a Greater of Silver, beſides a great Quantity of Cedar and Fir. Nor was *Solomon* unmindful of the Preſents he made him; for he ſent him every Year great Quantities of Corn, Wine and Oil, a Supply that *Hiram*, being an Iſlander, ſtood moſt in Need of.

He beſtowed upon him, moreover, twenty Cities upon the Borders of *Galilee*, not far from *Tyre*, of which upon Review and Conſideration, he declined the Acceptance, with a reſpectful Excuſe to *Solomon*, that he had no Need of them.

From this Refuſal, that part of the Country was called *Cabul*, which in the *Phœnician* Language, ſignifies, It does not pleaſe me.

So great was the King of *Tyre*'s Eſteem and Reliance on the Wiſdom of the King of *Iſrael*, that whenever any perplexed Caſe offered itſelf to his Conſideration, he applied himſelf to that extraordinary Prince for his Judgment and Direction. *Solomon* never failed to anſwer him to his Satisfaction, according to the true Reaſon and Nature of the Matter in Hand.

Menander, the Hiſtorian, who tranſlated *Tyrian* Annals out of the *Phœnician* Tongue into Greek, makes mention of theſe two Princes as follows.

" *Hiram* the Son of *Abibale*, ſuc-
" ceeded his Father in the King-
" dom of *Tyre*. He lived three and
" fifty Years, and reigned four and
" thirty.

" He annexed a piece of forced
" Ground, called the Great Field, to
" to the Iſland, and dedicated a Gol-
" den Pillar to Jupiter in his Tem-
" ple. He cut down Materials alſo
" in abundance upon Mount *Liba-*
" *non*, for the covering of Holy
" Places; and pulling down ancient
" Temples, but built new ones to
" Hercules and Aſtarte.

" He erected a Statue for Hercules
" in the month of Peritius; and then
" in an Expedition againſt the Ey-
" ceans, for not paying the Duty of
" a Tribute, as they ought to have
" done, he overcame them, and re-
" turned home again.

" In his Days there was one Ab-
" demonus, a young Man that took
" upon him to give *Solomon*, the
" King of *Jeruſalem*, a Solution of
" all dark and myſterious Queſtions
" that ſhould be put to him."

Ditus alſo writes to this Effect.

" *Abibale*, being now dead, *Hi-*
" *ram* his Son ſucceeded him, who
" by filling up void Places on the
" Eaſt Quarter of the Town, enlarg-
" ed the Borders, and brought the
" Temple of Olympian Jupiter, that
" before ſtood apart, and at a Diſt-
" ance, into the Compaſs of the City;
" enriching and adorning it with
" Golden Offerings to a very great Va-
" lue; after which he ordered the
" cutting down of Cedars upon
" Mount *Libanon* for the Uſe of Holy
" Places."

He farther adds, " that *Solomon*,
" the king of *Jeruſalem*, often ſent
" Problems to *Hiram*, upon the For-
" feit of a great Sum of Money
" if he failed of expounding them.
" Thoſe difficult Caſes were after-
wards

" ward not only unravelled by *Ab-*
" *demonus* a *Tyrian*, but new Propo-
" ſitions ſtarted by him, which *So-*
" *lomon* himſelf not being able to re-
" ſolve, was obliged to refund the
" greateſt Part of the Money." Thus far according to *Ditus*.

The Fortifications of *Jeruſalem* being deemed Inſufficient for the Defence of that ſpacious and opulent City, King *Solomon* having finiſhed the Temple of the Lord, and his own Place, in the moſt ſumptuous Manner, applied himſelf to the Completion of ſuch Repairs as were deemed neceſſary for the Security of the Place.

He built ſeveral Cities alſo of conſiderable Note, as *Aſor*, *Megiddo*, and *Gereze*, in the Land of the *Philiſtines*, which *Pharoah* the King of *Egypt* had formerly taken by Aſſault, and raiſing it to the ground, put every Creature in it to the Sword, giving it afterward to his Daughter upon the Match with *Solomon*.

This city the King rebuilt, for the Strength of its Situation, and the Uſe it might be of to the Government, as well in War as Peace.

He built likewiſe not far from thence, *Betharun* and *Baalath*, beſide other Places of Pleaſure, with reſpect to the Temperature of the Climate, the Delicacy of the Fruits, and Effects of the Water.

He poſſeſſed himſelf after this of the Entrance into the Deſart that lies towards *Syria*, where he built a very fair City, two Days Journey from the Upper *Syria*, one from *Euphrates*, and ſix from *Babylon*.

This City was erected at ſuch a Diſtance from the habitable Part of the Country, in Order to ſupply Travellers, who paſſed through the Deſarts with Water, as it abounded with Springs and Fountains.

This Town being built, walled, and ſtrongly fortified, was called *Tadmor*, which Name it bears among the *Syrians* to this Day. But the *Greeks* called it *Palmyra*.

As many Perſons laudably inquiſitive in Sacred Matters, have diſcovered great Deſire to know the Cauſe, wherefore the King of *Egypt*, from before the Time of *Abraham*, to the Days of *Solomon*, being upwards of thirteen hundred Years, are called by the Name of *Pharaoh*, we think it proper to obſerve in this Place, that *Pharoah*, in the *Egyptian* Language, ſignifies as much as King. That they were brought up by other Names; and that upon coming to the Exerciſe of a publick Character, they exchanged the Diſtinction of the Family, for the common Name of Power.

Thus it was with the Kings of *Alexandria*, who were educated by one Name, and governed under another; being all called *Ptolemies*, from the firſt of their Kings. *

* This was it, perhaps, that made *Herodotus* of *Halicarnaſſus*, in his Account of the Succeſſor to *Minæus* the firſt king of *Memphis*, reckon up to three hundred thirty Kings, referring

So it was with the Roman Emperors, who in caſe of ſuch an Elevation, dropped their private and Hereditary Names, and were all called *Ceſar*, with reſpect to the Character of a Sovereign Power.

Nor do we find in the whole Hiſtory of the Jewiſh Nation, that after *Pharaoh*, the Father in Law of *Solomon*, there was ever any other King of *Egypt* known by that Name.

There was ſtill a ſtubborn Remnant of the *Canaanites*, betwixt Mount *Lebanon*, and the City of *Amathe*, who for ſome Time diſputed their Allegiance to the Kings of *Iſrael*, till *Solomon* at laſt made them his Tributaries, upon Condition of furniſhing him Yearly with ſuch a certain Number of Slaves, as was agreed upon to be employ'd in tilling the Land, and other Sorts of Drudgery; for the *Iſraelites* were not employed in any Work that was Servile, neither would it have been reaſonable, when God had ſubdued ſo many Nations to his Power, for the Conquerors to deſcend to do the Buſineſs of their Captives.

As to the *Iſraelites*, their Genius lay more in Arms, Chariots Horſes, Exploits of War, and military Exerciſes.

The *Canaanites* in the mean Time were held to their Labour, and ſix hundred Officers of the King's put over them, to appoint them their Taſks, and keep them to their Work.

Solomon likewiſe for Re-defence of his Kingdom, cauſed a Fleet of Ships to be built in *Ezion-Geber*, an *Egyptian* Bay upon the Red-Sea. This Port was called *Beneric*, not far from the City of *Elan*, which in thoſe Days was reckoned to be under the Juriſdiction of the *Hebrews*.

In the Building, fitting and rigging out of this Navy, the King was greatly aſſiſted by *Hiram*, who ſent him as many expert Pilots and ſkilful Marriners, as he had Occaſion for, to conduct his Officers to the Land of *Ophir*, ſince called *India*, where having got together, four hundred * Talents of Gold, they returned with it to the King.

The King of *Iſrael*'s extraordinary Virtue and Wiſdom, having ſpread his Fame throughout the known World, had conſequently reached the Ears of the Queen of *Sheba*, an adjacent Kingdom, who being a Princeſs of extraordinary Underſtanding, and highly accompliſhed, the Renown of his Character had excited her Impatience to hear and ſee the King himſelf,

ferring to the Number without mentioning their Names, *Pharaoh* being one common Name to them all. Now upon the coming of a Woman afterwards to the government, he ſpeaks of her by the particular Name of *Nicaulis* the Appellation of *Pharaah* being only proper to the other Sex.

* Four hundred Talents in weight amounted to forty five thouſand ſix hundred and ninety five pounds Troy, and their Value in Gold was worth two million one hundred and ninety thouſand Pounds Engliſh Money.

ſelf, wiſely concluding, that experimental Proof ſurpaſſed the moſt confirmed Report, which, on proper Examination might be found inconcluſive or unauthenticated. Having debated the Point for ſome Time with herſelf, ſhe came to a Reſolution, notwithſtanding all the Hazards and Difficulties of a long and tedious Journey, to make him an honourable Viſit, for the Satisfaction of her Curioſity, as well as her Inclination and Judgment; and to enjoy the Benefit of Inſtruction from that Wiſdom, of which ſhe had heard ſuch an extraordinary Account.

With this Determination ſhe ſet forward toward *Jeruſalem*, with a Train and Equipage ſuitable to her Royal Dignity, taking with her a Number of Camels, laden with Gold, a great Variety of rich Perfumes, and precious Stones.

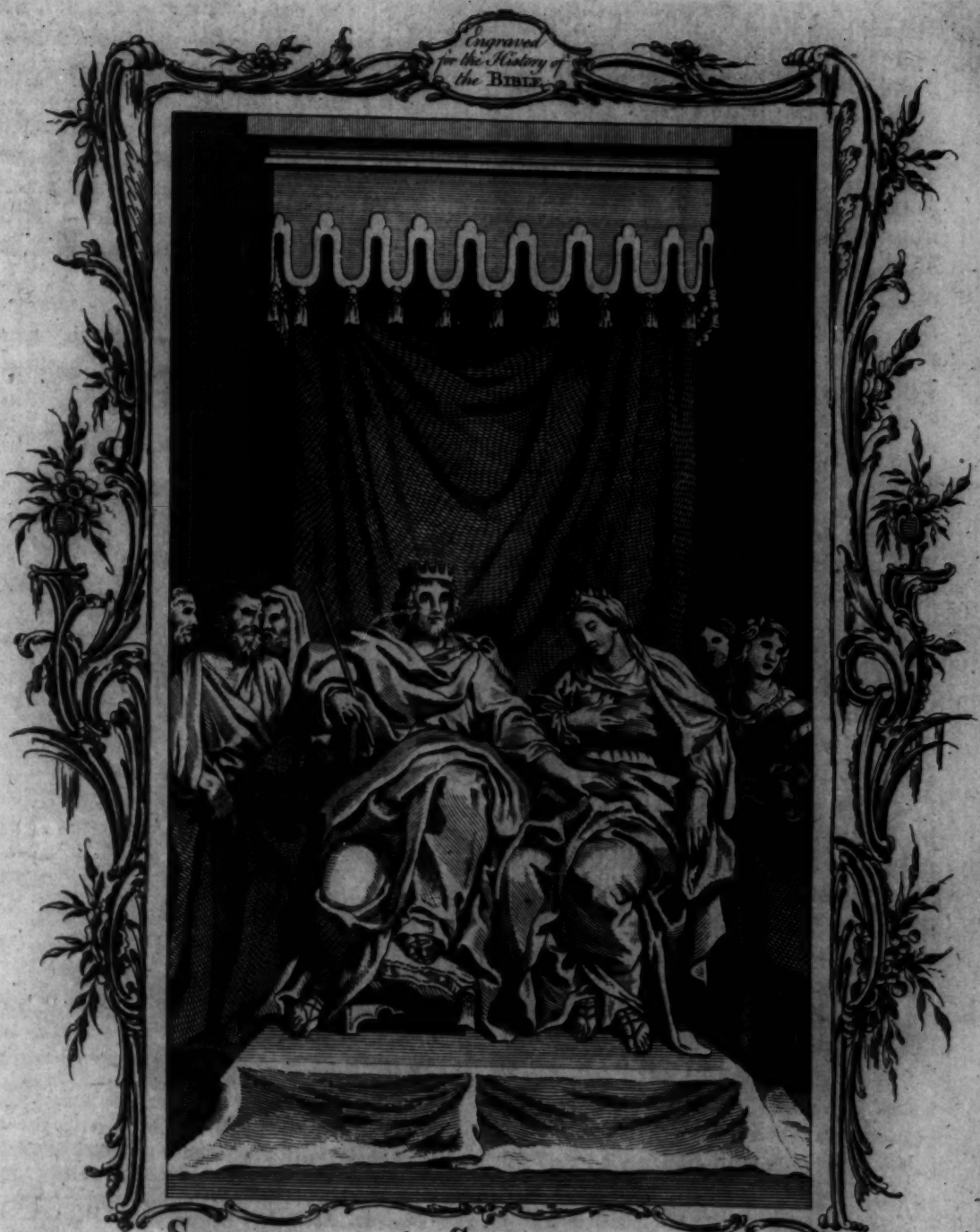
Upon her arrival, the King received her with all poſſible Honour, Courteſy and Reſpect; and with ſo much Eaſe and Clearneſs ſolved all the Difficulties ſhe propoſed, that with Aſtoniſhment ſhe beheld a Diſplay of his ſurpriſing Power, far ſuperior to that which had been generally rumoured concerning it.

She greatly admired the Magnificence of his Palace, the Order and Diſpoſition of the Building, and at the King's incomparable Skill, thro' the whole Contrivance and Conduct, but nothing moved her Admiration more, than the maſterly Execution of that Fabrick, called the Grove of *Lebanon*; the elegant and regular Courſe of his Entertainments; the Diſcipline and Economy of his Houſehold; and the peculiar Grace and Propriety, with which he conducted all his Concerns.

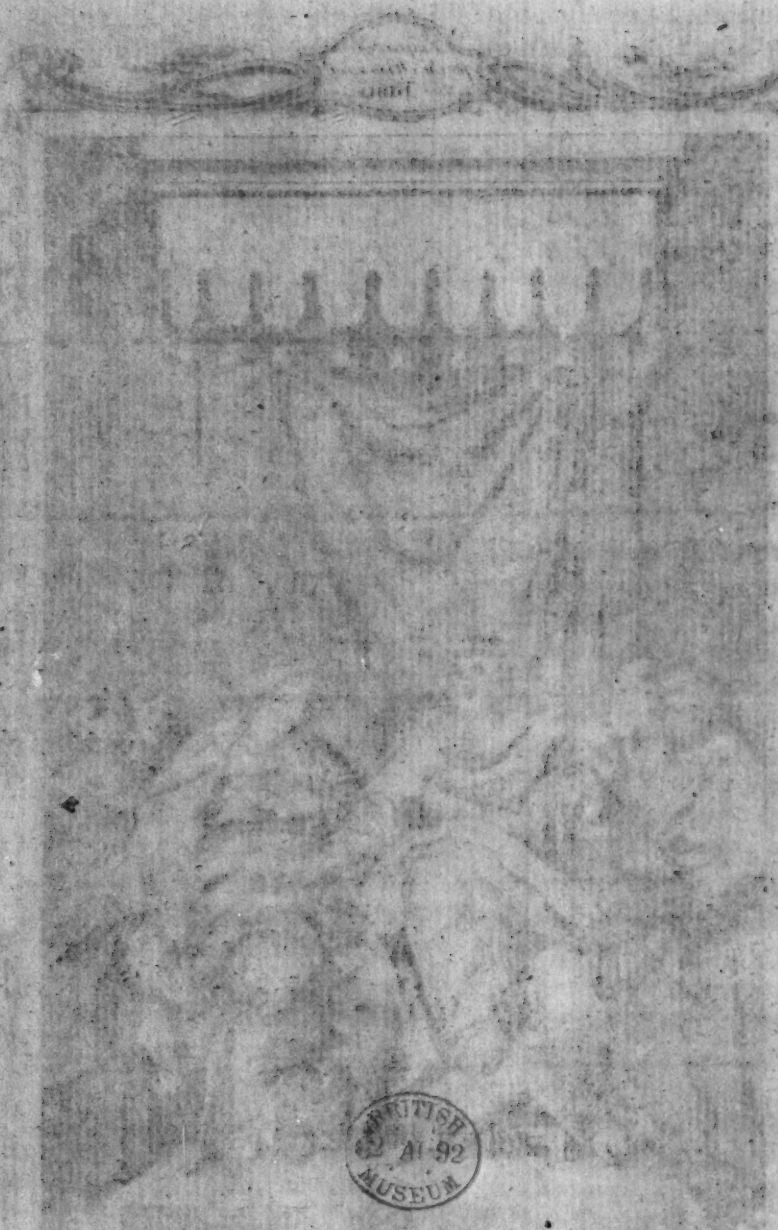
She was likewiſe infinitely pleaſed with the Sight of the Daily Sacrifices, and the Application, Care, and Veneration, with which the Prieſts and Levites performed their Part in the Worſhip.

The Regularity and Order of their ſtated Worſhip, employed her Thoughts Day and Night, and ſo exceedingly affected her Mind, that ſhe broke out into this rapturous addreſs.

Great Prince, Report is ſo doubtful and uncertain, that without a demonſtrative and experimental Confirmation of the Truth of what we hear, we are forced to ſuſpend our aſſent, eſpecially where the Fame of Things relates either to extreme Good or Evil; but with Reſpect to your incomparable Faculties; that is, to the Advantages of the Mind in a ſuperlative Degree of Knowledge and Underſtanding, and the Glory of your outward ſtate, the Rumour has been ſo far from partial, that it falls ſhort even of a common Juſtice; for though common Fame reported as much to your Honour as Words could expreſs, I have yet the Happineſs at this preſent Time to ſee much more than I heard. Bleſſed are the Hebrews; *bleſſed are the Friends and People of* Solomon, *that ſtand ever before him, and hear his Wiſdom; and bleſſed be God for his Goodneſs to this Land and Nation, in placing them under the Government of ſo excellent a Prince.*



SOLOMON & SHEBA. *1. Kings. 10.*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Nor did this great Princeſs teſtify her Admiration of the extraordinary Endowments of *Solomon* by Words alone, but as a farther Inſtance of the high Reſpect ſhe had for the King, ſhe made him a preſent of twenty Talents of Gold, Aromatical Spices, rich Perfumes, and precious Stones. to a prodigious Value.*

Nor was the King of *Iſrael* wanting in grateful Acknowledgment of the favour thus conferred upon him, for he denied the Queen nothing, and was much readier to give, than ſhe to aſk, even to the preventing of her Aſkings. After this reciprocal Interchange of Preſents given and taken, the Queen returned back to their own Country,

Soon after the Departure of the Queen of *Sheba*, *Solomon*'s Fleet returned from *Ophir*, (otherwiſe called the Land of Gold) with Stones for Jewels, and Pine Wood in Abundance; the latter was made Uſe of partly for Pillars and Supporters to the King's Temple and Palace, and partly for muſical Inſtruments, as Harps, Cymbals, Pſalteries, and the like, for the *Levites* to glorify God upon in Company with their Voices †.

This Plate-Fleet brought the King ſix Hundred Sixty ſix Talents of Gold, over and above the Merchants Adventure, and what the Governors and Kings of *Arabia* ſent him for Preſents. Of this Gold he cauſed to be caſt two Hundred Targets, weighing ſixty Hundred Shekels of Gold each; and theſe were all hung up in the great Hall of the Grove of *Lebanon*. His drinking cups were all of beaten Gold too, garniſhed with precious Stones, and moſt curiouſly wrought by eminent Artiſts; in ſhort, the reſt of his Utenſils were of the ſame Metal ‡.

The Renown of *Solomon's* Wiſdom, Power, and Magnificence having now extended to the remoteſt Climates, ſeveral Potent Princes moſt ardently deſired to ſee him, and embraced every Opportunity of teſtifying by their Submiſſion, and Munificence the Veneration in which they held his dignified Character. They ſent him Gold and Silver Plate, Purple Robes, Spices and Perfumes of all Sorts, Horſes, Chariots, and Mules.

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* They ſpeak alſo of a Root of Balſam that ſhe brought with her, which (according to a tradition we have) was the firſt Plant of the Kind that ever came into *Judea*, where it hath propagated ſo wonderfully ever ſince.

† It is to be noted, that for Size and Beauty, *Solomon* had never ſeen any of this Sort of Wood comparable to it before. This was not the Wood that paſſes commonly upon the World for Pine, in the way of Trade, betwixt Buyers and Sellers: this has ſomewhat of the Grain of a Fig-tree, only Whiter, and more Gloſſy. We thought it not amiſs to advertize the Reader of this common Miſtake, that falls ſo naturally upon this Occaſion into *Solomon*'s Story.

‡ There was no Trading with Money in this caſe; for the King had his Ships in the ſea of *Tarſus* that merchandiſed with foreign Nations; and in exchange for Commodities of his own, brought him back Gold and Silver, great Quantities of Ivory, Blacks, Apes, &c. Going and coming, they reckoned upon this Expedition as a three Years Voyage.

Bochart

for burden, ſuch as for Strength and Beauty they thought might be moſt acceptable to the King; ſo that he had now an Addition of four Hundred Chariots to what he had before; that is, a Thouſand Chariots, and twelve Thouſand Horſes, that for Beauty and Speed were beyond all others; and to grace the Spectacle, they had the Flower of the Youth to ride and manage them. They were all comely Perſons, in Purple Veſt; their Hair flowing, which added a Luſtre to their Motion, and a Dignity to their general Appearance.

This was the Body Guard, which with their Arms and Quivers, attended the King's Chariot (himſelf mounted in it, Cloathed in white) to a pleaſant Retirement not far from the City, in which for the curious Gardens, Walks, and Fountains, and the Fruitfulneſs of the Place, he took great Delight.

Such was the Regularity and Preciſeneſs of this extraordinary Prince, in the minuteſt Caſes, that fell under his Inſpection, that he provided for the very paving of the Highways that led to his Palace at *Jeruſalem*, partly for the Convenience of Paſſengers, and partly for his own Magnificience.

He kept not many Chariots about his Perſon, but quartered them here and there by certain Numbers in the adjacent Towns; and theſe Places were called his Chariot-Towns.

Silver was as plentiful in *Jeruſalem* as Stones; and Cedars, which had never been ſeen in *Judea* before, were now as common as Mulberry-Trees.

He gave commiſſion alſo to his Egyptian Merchants to buy him a Proviſion of Chariots with two Horſes, at the price of ſix hundred Silver Drachmas a-piece; and theſe were to be ſent away to the Kings of *Syria*, and beyond the River *Euphrates*.

The Impartiality of the ſacred Hiſtorian is in no inſtance more evident, than in his Recital of the Tranſaction that occurred during the Reign of this memorable Prince; who is repreſented as the moſt pious, glorious, and wiſe monarch, that ever ſwayed the Scepter of *Iſrael* in the former part of his Government; and as juſtly cenſured for departing in the latter Clauſe of it, from the Precepts of his Forefather, and ſullying the Glories he had before acquired.

His raging Luſt after Women, tranſported him beyond all Bounds; nor could the Women of his own Country ſerve his Turn, for he took indifferently Women of all Nations, *Sidonians*, *Tyrians*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, &c. contrary to the inſtitution of *Moſes*, which forbid the *Hebrews* any intercourſe of Marriage with Strangers, wiſely foreſeeing, that ſtrange Women ſhould inveigle them over to worſhip ſtrange Gods too.

This was the true Reaſon of the Precaution againſt ſuch Marriages; for the Violation of one Law, is but

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SOLOMONS IDOLATRY. *1 Kings. 11. V. 5.*

a Step toward the Breaking of another; and the taking of a prohibited Wife, naturally led to the embracing of a prohibited Religion.

But *Solomon*'s ſenſual Appetite was deaf, to all Counſels of Sobriety and Reaſon. He had no leſs than ſeven * hundred Wives, that were Princeſſes, (the Daughter of the King of *Egypt* for one,) and three hundred Concubines; and the Paſſion he had for the Charms of their Converſation carried him into Compliances with them in the Impiety of their Practices and Opinions, as the moſt effectual Earneſt he could give them of his Tenderneſs and Affection.

As he grew more advanced in Years he felt the Decay of Age in his Mind, as well as in his Body, and ſtill as he became more and more Careleſs and Remiſs in the Exerciſe of the true Worſhip, he was the more eaſily prevailed upon to join with theſe ſtrange Women in a falſe one; nor was this the firſt Breach of the Law that he was guilty of; for he had tranſgreſſed the Rule, in the very Figures of his Bulls, under his Brazen Sea, and in the Lions afterward that were ſet as a Guard upon the Throne, which were all directly againſt a poſitive Inſtitution.

He had at the ſame Time in his own Family the moſt glorious Precedent for Honour and Virtue, in the Example of his Father, whoſe Piety and Practice was ſo expreſly recommended to his Imitation, that God inculcated the Charge over and over to him in his Sleep; and upon the Pain of his utmoſt Diſpleaſure, enjoined him to tread in his Father's Steps.

This he neglected to do, and came in the Concluſion to an ignominious End.

The Eye of Omniſcience, having beheld his vicious Practices, it pleaſed God at length to let him know, that his Diſpleaſure was kindled againſt him, by ſending a Prophet to aſſure him, *That his Wickedneſs was not ſo ſecret, and he ſhould not paſs long unpuniſhed; but in regard to a Promiſe from Heaven, to his Father, that he ſhould have no other Succeſſor, the Prophet told him that his Government ſhould not be taken from him while he was living, but that after his Death, his Son ſhould ſuffer for the Iniquities of his Father; not that there ſhould be an univerſal Defection, but that ten Tribes only ſhould revolt, and the other two continue in their Allegience to the Son of* Solomon, *for his Grand-*

* This is a Circumſtance that greatly Terminates *Solomon*'s Character; and upon the firſt reading it one is very apt to wonder what poſſible uſe he could make of this milliad of Wives and Concubines: but when we conſider, that he was between forty and fifty Years old, before he ran into this Exceſs, it is moſt reaſonable to think, that he kept this Multitude of Women more for State than any other Service: and that this Cuſtom ſtill prevails among the eaſtern Princes, who have a great Number of Wives, whom they never ſaw, is atteſted by Travellers of the greateſt Credit and Authority.

Father's Sake, and for the Sake of the Temple at Jeruſalem, *which God had made Choice of for the Place of his Habitation.*

This ſevere Chaſtiſement, which foretold his ſudden Dejection from the moſt exalted Glory and Dignity, to the loweſt State and Condition, wounded him to the very Soul; nor could he, on Reflection, deny the Juſtice of the Sentence.

Some ſhort Time after this denouncing Meſſage by the Prophet, God, ſtirred up a bitter Enemy againſt *Solomon*, whoſe Name was *Hadad*, an *Edomite* by Birth, and a Branch of the Royal Family. The Ground of his Animoſity was as follows.

When the *Hebrews* over-ran the Country of *Edom*, under the Command of *Joab*, who at that Time was *David*'s General. *Joab* having ſubdued the People, put to the Sword all the Males he could find in the Province that were able to bear Arms, and this Execution continued for ſix Months.

This *Hadad* who in thoſe Days was but a Child, made his eſcape to *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, who not only received him with great Humanity, but very generouſly gave him Houſes, Lands and Revenues for his Entertainment, and conceived ſuch an Affection further for him, upon his growing up, that he married him to his own Wife's Siſter, whoſe Name was *Taphenes*, who bore him a Son that was trained up with the Children of *Pharaoh*.

In proceſs of Time News was brought to *Egypt*, that *David* and *Joab* were both dead; and *Hadad*, upon theſe Tidings deſired *Pharaoh*'s leave to return to his own Country.

The King, not well pleaſed with his Requeſt, aſked him What he wanted, or what he meant by that Earneſtneſs to leave the beſt Friend he had in the World? and tho' he preſſed him moſt earneſtly, he could not as yet prevail.

Solomon being now in a declining Condition, and the Meaſure of his Iniquity well nigh full, God put it into *Pharoah*'s Heart, whom he had hitherto reſtrained to let *Hadad* return; ſo that he came forthwith into *Edom*, with a Deſign to ſtir up the People to a Rebellion againſt *Solomon*.

But finding the Garriſons ſo ſtrong, and the Country in ſuch a Poſture, that there was no Poſſibility of Succeſs by a Surprize, he took new Meaſures, and went from thence into *Syria*, where he joined Intereſt with one *Rezon*, a Fugitive from his Maſter *Hadadezer*, the King of *Zoab*, and a famous Captain of a Body of *Banditti*, that ravaged the Country at Pleaſure.

Hadad entered into a League with this Man; and, with his Aſſiſtance, ſubdued that Part of *Syria*, where he got himſelf to be declared King, and made ſo many Inroads upon the Land of the *Iſraelites*, that Murder and Plunder generally prevailed even during the Reign of the once potent King *Solomon*.

Nor were theſe Affronts and Indignities from a Stranger, all that the King Suffered; for a more dangerous Con-

Conſpiracy was formed againſt him at the ſame Time, in his own Kingdom, by *Jeroboam*, the Son of *Nebat*, a Man of a turbulent and ambitious Spirit, and one who was poſſeſſed with a Notion, that he had long ſince received from an old Prophecy, an Account of the Part he was to bear in the overturning of the Government.

Jeroboam being left by his Father very young, and under the Tuition of his Mother: *Solomon* took Notice of him as he grew up towards Man's Eſtate, for a Youth of promiſing Parts, and made him Overſeer of his Works, being at that Time repairing and rebuilding the Walls of *Jeruſalem*.

He acquitted himſelf ſo well in that Commiſſion, that he gave him the military Command of the Tribe of *Joſeph*, as a Conſideration for his Induſtry and Service.

As he was one Day travelling out of *Jeruſalem*, about his Buſineſs, the Prophet *Ahijah*, the *Shilonite*, met him upon the Way; and after a formal Salute, took him aſide, and there laid hold of the Garment he had on, and rent it into twelve Pieces, bidding him take Ten of them to himſelf, and delivering to him the Will of God in theſe Words,

God is reſolved to tear the Government from Solomon; *and for his Promiſe Sake, to give him the two contiguous Tribes to the Son of* Solomon, *and the other ten to you, as a juſt Puniſhment for giving up himſelf to ſtrange Women, and to ſtrange Gods; wherefore ſince you ſee the Ground of his Rejection, let* Solomon's *miſerable Caſe be a Warning to you, not to do the ſame Things yourſelf that ruined him. Be juſt to all Men; obſerve and protect the Laws; imitate* David's *Virtues of Piety and Religion, and you may promiſe yourſelf the Comfort and Enjoyment of* David's *reward.*

Jeroboam was not a litttle elevated with theſe Words of the Prophet; and being naturally of a very haughty and aſpiring Spirit, every thing that gratified his Ambition, made him turbulent and unquiet.

The Prophetical Prediction reſted upon his Mind; and the firſt Thing he did, after he came to the Army, was to Tamper with the People againſt their Sovereign, and to ſet up for himſelf.

Solomon was no Stranger to the Malice of his Deſigns; and there was a Train laid to ſurprize him, and diſpatch him; but the Plot was diſcovered, and *Jeroboam* eſcaped to *Shiſhak*, the King of *Egypt*, where he waited the Death of *Solomon*, for a fair Opportunity to revive his Pretenſions.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Death of Solomon. *Revolt of the ten Tribes from their Allegiance to* Rehoboam, *his Son and Succeſſor. They declare for* Jeroboam, *who ſeduces them to Idolatry. Awful Diſplay of the Divine Vengeance againſt wilful Diſobedience, in God's Diſpenſations toward wicked Kings, and a perverſe People. Death of* Rehoboam. *Prediction of the Ruin of* Jeroboam, *and his whole Family. Exact Fulfilment of that Prophecy.*

SOON after this ſpecial Revelation of the divine Mind and Will to *Jeroboam*, *Solomon* the Renowned King of *Iſrael* paid the Debt of Nature, having reigned over that mighty People forty Years.*

He was undoubtedly the wiſeſt and richeſt Prince that ever exiſted, and might have reigned the happieſt, if his inordinate Attachment to Women had not hurried him into a Commiſſion of ſuch Enormities in the Sight of God, as entailed Miſery on himſelf, and were the Source of numberleſs Misfortunes to the *Iſraelites*, as will appear in the Sequel of this Hiſtory.

Solomon being deceaſed, and *Rehoboam* his Son ſucceeding in Courſe to the Throne, ſome of the Grandees ſent immediately into *Egypt*, to inform *Jeroboam*, of the Event, and to recall him.

Upon this Notice he repaired to *Shechem*, and *Rehoboam* propoſed to call an Aſſembly, and enter upon the Government by the common Declaration and Conſent of the People.

Upon this Occaſion divers of the People and leading Men, together with *Jeroboam*, went to *Rehoboam*, and addreſſed him by way of Advice and Reſpect, repreſenting to him, That his Father had laid heavy Burdens upon his Subjects, and that they were in Hopes that they ſhould find him Eaſier; as it was to his Intereſt and Security, to make himſelf beloved rather than feared.

They humbly recommended this to his Conſideration; and *Rehoboam* took three Days time to conſider of it.

The Delay of his Anſwer gave them ſome Jealouſy what would be the Reſult, eſpecially in a Caſe, as they underſtood it ſo eaſily, and ſo neceſſary to be reſolved immediately, and ſo well becoming the Years and Circumſtances of a young Prince.

However, as he declined giving them a poſitive Anſwer, they ſtill entertained ſome Hopes of his Compliance.

In Conſequence of this general Application *Rehoboam* adviſed with his Father's Friends and Counſellers what Anſwer to return them, being both

* The account *Joſephus* gives of *Solomon*'s Reign, wherein he lengthens it to eighty Years, is moſt certainly falſe, as having the Addition of forty Years, not warranted by any Authority of Scripture, which tells us that he came to the Crown when young, and that he reigned in *Jeruſalem* over all *Iſrael* but forty Years.

well affected to the Publick, as well as theſe, reſpected by them, adviſed him by all means to treat them with Courteſy and Condeſcenſion, aſſuring him that he would gain much more upon them by a popular Freedom, than by ſtanding to the Formalities of Majeſty and State; there being no ſuch Tie upon the Hearts of the People, as Affability and Humility in the Prince.

Nothing could have been ſaid more to the Purpoſe in general, or more eſpecially to his Purpoſe in particular, having a Kingdom in his View.

But his Underſtanding was perverted by a judicial Infatuation, to ſuch a Degree, that he rejected their Counſel, formed a Cabal of his own Humour and Years, told them what had paſſed, and demanded their Opinion upon the whole Affair.

They took the Point into Debate; and whether for Want of Experience and Foreſight, or that God had blinded them, they came all to this Agreement upon the Queſtion:

Rehoboam was to tell them, *That ſince they complained of his Predeceſſor, they ſhould find his little Finger heavier than his Father's Loins. If they thought themſelves ill uſed formerly, they muſt expect greater Severity now; and that if his Father had chaſtiſed them with Whips, he himſelf was reſolved to chaſtiſe them with Scorpions.*

The King was ſo delighted with this proud, inſulting Anſwer, that upon the third Day, when the People were gathered together in the greateſt Anxiety imaginable, betwixt Hope and Fear of the Doom they were to receive,

The King appeared, and rejecting the Opinion of his Father's Counſellors, gave the People for Anſwer, the very Words that the young Men had put in his Mouth; the Providence of God having ſo ordered it, that the Prophecy of the Prophet *Abijah* might be fulfilled.

Theſe Words were no leſs terrible in the Hearing, than the dreadful Things they threatened would have been in the Execution; inſomuch that they all cried out in a Rage, as with one Voice; *What have we to do with the Houſe of* David? *Let him take to himſelf the Temple that his Father built.*

And the Uproar looked like a Prelude to a general Revolt. The Sedition was ſo violent, that *Hadoram*, one of the King's Officers in the Treaſury, being ſent out to pacify them, by laying the Blame upon the intemperate Zeal of ſome hot-headed young Men, the People ſtoned him to Death, without ſo much as hearing him.

Rehoboam looked upon this Violence to be levelled at him, rather than his Officer, (nor was his Conjecture without Ground) ſo that he preſently mounted his Chariot, and poſted away to *Jeruſalem*, to avoid the Fury of the Mutineers.

The Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, as one Man, ſtuck to him, and proclaimed him for their King; but the reſt of the People went over to

Jeroboam; and from that Day forward, revolted from their Allegiance to the Houſe of *David*.

Such was *Rehoboam*'s Indignation at the Thought of this Revolt, that he ſummoned a full Convention of the two Tribes that ſtood firm to their Allegiance, and drew out one hundred and eighty thouſand Soldiers, propoſing to himſelf, with this Body of Men, to reduce the other ten Tribes to their Duty by Force.

While he was preparing for this Enterprize, he was admoniſhed by a Prophet from God, not to engage himſelf in a Civil War, eſpecially where the Deſertion was in ſome Meaſure the Work of a Divine Direction.

Having promiſed theſe Things relative to the Defection of the Tribes, we ſhall proceed to relate the Conſequences, as diſtinctly as the various Subjects will admit of.

Jeroboam built himſelf a Palace at *Shechem*, which he made his Place of Reſidence, and afterwards, for Variety's Sake, he erected another at *Penuel*.

As the Feaſt of Tabernacles approached, he thus deliberated with himſelf on the Danger he ſhould incur, by permitting the People to go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip: *If I now ſuffer the People to go up to* Jeruſalem, *and leave them at Liberty to celebrate that Feſtival, they will be ſo delighted with the Shews and Ceremonies of the Place, and of the Religion, that they will be liable to change their Minds, and be returning to their old King again, as well as to their old Way, which may tend to the extreme Hazard, even of my Life, as alſo of my Government.*

Now to prevent this, he bethought himſelf of the following Expedient: He cauſed to be made two Golden Calves, and two Temples to be built, the one at *Bethel*, and the other at *Dan*, which is a Town ſituate at the Head of the *Leſſer Jordan*.

Theſe Images were conſecrated in both Places; and having convened an Aſſembly of the ten Tribes under his Command, he harangued them to this Purpoſe:

I need not tell you, my Countrymen, that God is every where, and not confined to any certain Place; but whereever we are, he hears our Prayers, and accepts our Worſhip in one Place as well as in another; and therefore I am not at all of Opinion for your going up to Jeruſalem *at this Time, to a People that hate you.*

It is a long and tedious Journey, and all this only for the Sake of Religion.

He that built that Temple was but a Man, as every one is here; and the Golden Calves that I have provided for you, the one in Bethel, *and the other in* Dan, *are conſecrated, as well as that Temple; and ſo much nearer you, on purpoſe for the Convenience of your Worſhip; where you may pay your Duty to God in ſuch Manner as beſt pleaſeth him.*

As for the Prieſts and Levites, I ſhall make ſuch a Proviſion for you, that you ſhall have no Want, either of the Tribe of Levi, *or of the Race of* Aaron. *Let him that has a Mind to enter into the Sacerdotal Office, initiate him-*

himſelf into the Prieſthood, by the Sacrifice of a Calf, and a Ram, according to the Inſtitution of Aaron, *who was the firſt of that Order, and only qualified for that Function.*

This was *Jeroboam*'s Method of ſeducing the Multitude into an Apoſtacy from the Laws of their God, and of their Country; and he himſelf conſequently was the capital Cauſe of thoſe Calamities that befel the *Iſraelites*; ſuch as foreign Wars, Routs, Captivity, and the like.

The Feſtival of the ſeventh Month was now drawing on, and *Jeroboam* took a Reſolution to Worſhip the ſame Way at *Bethel* that the two Tribes did at *Jeruſalem*.

There was an Altar erected before the Golden Calf: he himſelf perſonated the High-Prieſt, and went up with his own Prieſts after the Manner of the Temple Worſhip.

But as he was preparing to put Fire to the Offering in the Sight of all the People, there came out a Prophet from *Jeruſalem* in that very Point of Time, whoſe Name was *Jadon*. He was ſent by God, and being advanced into the Middle of the Crowd; he addreſſed himſelf in the King's Hearing to the Altar, in Words to this Purpoſe.

Altar, Altar! Thus ſaith the Lord, There ſhall ariſe one out of the Houſe of Judah, *whoſe Name ſhall be* Joſiah; *who upon thee ſhall put to Death the falſe Prophets, Seducers and Impoſtors of thoſe Times, and upon thee ſhall burn their Bones; and to the End that no Creature may doubt the Truth of this Prediction, the Authority of it ſhall be now confirmed by a Prodigy.*

The Altar ſhall fall to Pieces, and the Fat of the Sacrifices upon it ſhall be ſpilt upon the Ground.

The King was ſo inflamed by theſe Words of the Prophet, that he lifted up his Hand againſt him, and commanded aloud, that ſome-body ſhould lay hold of him. But his Arm was immediately ſo benummed and blaſted, that it was like a dead Limb, nor could he draw it back again.

The Altar fell to Pieces, and the Fat of the Sacrifices was thrown upon the Ground, as the Prophet had foretold.

The King, finding by what Spirit the Man ſpoke, and that he was no Counterfeit, beſought him to pray to God on his Behalf, for the reſtoring of his withered Arm; which being done, and the Miracle wrought, *Jeroboam* thankfully acknowledged the Benefit of the Cure, and earneſtly preſſed the Prophet to ſtay and take ſome Refreſhment with him; but he excuſed himſelf, by alledging an Injunction that God had laid upon him, not ſo much as to taſte either Bread or Wine in that City, nor to return the ſame Way he came.

This ſolemn and reſerved Behaviour of the Prophet, confirmed the King in his Belief of the Reality of his Miſſion from God, and conſequently excited his Terror, leſt his Predictions concerning him ſhould be fulfilled.

There was at *Bethel* a certain falſe Prophet, that was in *Jeroboam*'s Favour, not for the Truth, for he was an

an Impoſtor; but for the uttering ſuch Prophecies as he knew were pleaſing to his Maſter, and ſubſervient to his own Intereſt.

This Man was old; and as he lay upon his Bed, his Sons brought him News of a famous Prophet that was come to *Jeruſalem*, and what Wonders he had done; with the Story of *Jeroboam*'s withered Arm, and the Recovery of it, at the Prophet's Interceſſion to God for him; and how he was now gone back again, and which way he went.

The Fame of this Stranger created ſuch a Jealouſy in the old Man, leſt he ſhould be ſupplanted in his Maſter's Favour, that he preſently ordered his Sons to ſaddle his Aſs, which being immediately done, the Man mounted, and poſted with all imaginable Expedition to ſeek after the ſtrange Prophet. He followed him Step by Step, till he came up with him at laſt, as he was reſting himſelf under the Shadow of a large ſpreading Oak.

After the firſt Salute, the falſe Prophet deſired him to return home with him, and take ſome Refreſhment.

The Stranger poſitively refuſed his Invitation, telling him that God had forbidden him either to eat or drink in that City.

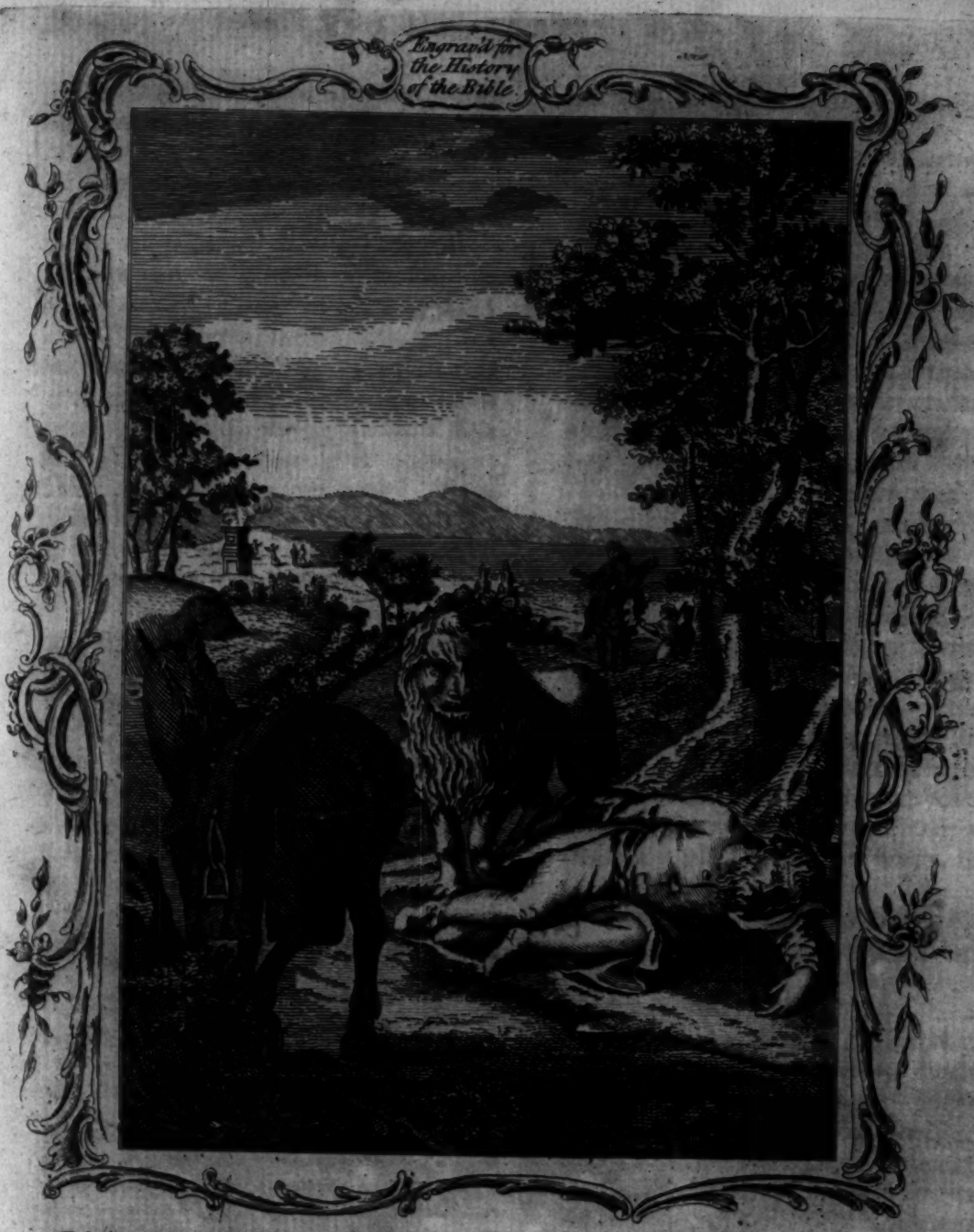
But the impious Impoſtor arrogated to himſelf a Power to forgive this Deviation from the Command of God, and ſo far prevailed upon *Jadon*, that he gave Credit to his wicked Inſinuation, accepted of his Invitation, and went along with him.

While they were at Dinner, and in the Freedom of Diſcourſe, God appeared to *Jadon*, and told him, That he would not only puniſh him for his Diſobedience, but the very Manner of his Puniſhment, which was, that he ſhould be torn to Pieces upon the Way by a Lion, and that his Body ſhould not be buried in the Sepulchre of his Fore-fathers.

It fell out accordingly, and perhaps God ordered it ſo, for the hardening of *Jeroboam*'s Heart, into a Diſbelief of *Jadon*, upon ſo remarkable a Miſcarriage. For, in his Way back to *Jeruſalem*, a Lion tore him off his Aſs, and killed *(a)* him. The

(a) Killed him. It has been aſſerted by thoſe who are too ready to arraign the divine Providence, that the Puniſhment of this Prophet was very inadequate to the Crime he had committed, which was of a very trivial Nature, and if it merited any Puniſhment at all, it ought to have been much milder than what was really inflicted: But, who art thou, vain Man! that dareſt thus impiouſly to call in queſtion the Juſtice of thy Maker? This Prophet had ſufficient Evidence of the Truth of his own Revelation; had ſufficient Cauſe to ſuſpect ſome corrupt Ends in the Prophet who came to recall him; and had ſufficient Reaſon to expect an Interpoſition of the ſame Power that gave him the Injunction, to repeal it: His Crime therefore was an eaſy Credility, and a Compliance with an Offer, merely to gratify a petulant Appetite, which he well knew was repugnant to a divine Command. We have no Reaſon then to ſay, that his Crime was ſmall, or his Puniſhment too ſevere; but let us learn from hence, not to ſuffer our Faith to be perverted by any Suggeſtions, which are made againſt a Revelation, whoſe Authority is divine and inconteſtible.

Aſs



The DISOBEDIENT PROPHET *Slain.* 1 Kings. Ch. 13. Ver. 14.

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Aſs remaining untouched, and ſtanding, ſtill while the Lion laid by the Carcaſs, like a Guard to both.

The Relation of this Diſaſter being brought to the falſe Prophet by ſome Travellers that paſſed that Way, he appointed his Sons to fetch the Body into the City, which being done, he gave it a magnificent Burial, charging his Sons, whenever he died, to ſee his own Body laid in the ſame Monument. For, ſaid he, *Whatever this good Man has ſpoken concerning the City, the Altar, the Prieſts, and the falſe Prophets, is all true.*

Now when I am dead, and my Bones depoſited with his, I am ſafe; for who ſhall know his Bones from mine?

As ſoon as *Jadon's* Funeral Rites were finiſhed, the Falſe Prophet haſtened to *Jeroboam*, and obſerving the Anxiety of his Mind, enquired the Cauſe of ſuch extraordinary Dejection, repreſenting the Folly of being affected by the Words of a Madman.

But the King, ſenſibly affected, demanded of him, what he thought of the Prodigy of the Altar, and the miraculous Loſs and Recovery of his Arm? (relating both the Circumſtances at length.)

The Man, ſays he, certainly is a Man of God, and a true Prophet, or elſe he could never have done all this.

The other in the mean Time did all he could to diſguiſe the Truth, with plauſible Gloſſes and Diſtinctions.

As to the Affair of your Hand, ſays he, addreſſing himſelf to the King, it is very probable you had over-wrought yourſelf, with carrying Sacrifices to the Altar. The very Wearineſs made it numb at firſt, perhaps; but after a little Reſt, you ſee it came to itſelf again.

Now, with Reſpect to the Altar, it was new built; and not being thoroughly ſettled, it ſunk under the Weight of an inſupportable Burden of Sacrifices that were laid upon it.

And as concerning the holy Man's End, he obſerved, that he was killed by a Lion; and that there was not the leaſt Sign or Token of a Prophet in all this.

The King was ſo corrupted with theſe Inſinuations, that from thence forward he had no longer any Thought of God or his Commands; but, on the contrary, abandoned himſelf wholly to the Love, Study and Practice of all Manner of Wickedneſs; and to ſuch a Degree too, that in effect he bid Defiance to all that was ſacred, working all Manner of Iniquity with Greedineſs.

Rehoboam, being King all this Time of the two Tribes before-mentioned, built and fortified ſeveral fair and ſtrong Cities, as *Bethlehem*, *Etam*, *Tekoa*, *Bethzur*, *Shoco*, *Adullam*, *Gath*, *Mareſhah*, *Ziph*, *Adoraim*, *Lachiſh*, *Azekah*, *Zorah*, *Aijalon*, and *Hebron*, all in the Tribe of *Judah*, beſide other Towns, in the Lot of *Benjamin*, which he provided with good Garriſons and Governors, and with Corn, Oil, and other Neceſſaries in Abundance, for their Maintenance and Defence; beſide many thouſands of Shields and Lances.

While *Rehoboam* continued at *Jeruſalem*, there came up from all Parts, great Numbers of Prieſts and Levites, and as many of the Laity too, as made any Conſcience of obeying the Commandments of the God of *Iſrael*, leaving their Habitations to attend his ſolemn Worſhip.

They were all weary of *Jeroboam*'s Tyranny, and forcing them to worſhip his Calves, to the Diſhonour of the true God. The Diſcontent, in fine, was ſo great, that within the Space of three Years, the Power and Intereſt of *Rehoboam* was mightily increaſed.

The King's firſt Wife was his Kinſwoman, by whom he had three Children, and he afterwards married *Maacah*, and the Daughter of *Abſalom*, by whom he had *Abijah*, and ſhe was related to him too. He had ſeveral Wives beſide, and Children by them, but none were ſo dear to him as *Maacah*. He had eighteen legitimate Wives, and ſixty Concubines, by whom he had eight and twenty Sons, and ſixty Daughters. Amongſt whom *Abijah*, the Son of *Maacah*, was the Perſon he deſigned for his Succeſſor, committing his Treaſure and ſtrong Holds all to his Truſt.

But it fell out with *Rehoboam*, as in common with other Mortals; Proſperity puffed him up, and in Time ruined him; for the greater he grew in the World, the more Liberty he took to be *(b)* wicked; and not only contemned God, and his holy Commandments himſelf, but influenced the People by his Example to the ſame iniquitous Practices. It is natural for Subjects to be depraved by the evil Example of their Superiors; for the Virtue or the Iniquity of the Governor is generally a Sort of Rule for the People to walk by; or in other Words, Not to do as they do, is tacitly to condemn their Doings: Thus it happened to *Rehoboam*, where the People were wicked and licentious, for fear of diſpleaſing the King.

Such flagrant Violations of the Divine Law, and general Depravity in a People who had received ſo many and ſignal Favours from God, could not fail in meeting with the Divine Reſentment.

It pleaſed God therefore to avenge himſelf upon *Rehoboam*, by the Hand of *Shiſhak* the King of *Egypt*, not by *Seſoſtris*, as *Herodotus* miſtakes the Matter.

This *Shiſhak*, in the fifth Year of *Rehoboam*'s Reign, marched againſt him with a vaſt Army. They were reckoned twelve hundred Chariots, ſixty thouſand Horſe, and forty hundred thouſand Foot; the Soldiers being moſt of them *Africans* and *Ethio-*

four

(b) To be Wicked. Fooliſh and unwiſe Prince! to imagine himſelf ſecure amidſt the moſt numerous Legions, while he rejected that Aſſiſtance which alone could preſerve him, and rendered himſelf obnoxious to the Indignation of that Being, by whoſe ſole Permiſſion Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice; who can at any Time make a Land barren for the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.

pians.

pians. With this Army *Shiſhak* broke in upon the *Iſraelites*, and took into his Protection ſeveral of their ſtrong Towns, that ſurrendered of their own Accord.

In all theſe Places he left Garriſons, and marched immediately up to *Jeruſalem*, where *Rehoboam* and his People were blocked up in the Town.

The King in this Streight betook himſelf to Prayer and Supplication for Victory over his Enemies, but could not prevail for an Anſwer to his Satisfaction; and thereupon *Shemaiah* the Prophet told him, for his greater Terror, that God threatened to forſake all thoſe that forſake him firſt. This terrified them all into an Acknowledgment of their Wickedneſs, and of God's juſt Judgment upon them for their Apoſtaſy and Diſobedience.

Being now brought to the Extremity of (*c*) Deſpair, the Prophet told the King once again, that God was pleaſed ſo far to accept of their Humiliation and Repentance, that they ſhould not be utterly deſtroyed and cut off, but only delivered up in Subjection and Slavery to the *Egyptians*, that they might learn by Experience, whether it was better to ſerve God or Man.

Thus alarmed, *Rehoboam* delivered up *Jeruſalem* to *Shiſhak*, upon certain Conditions; but the Conqueror, without any Regard to Faith, or Honour, broke his Articles, pillaged the Temple, took away all the Plate and Treaſure, as well appertaining to the Sanctuary, as the King, to an ineſtimable Value, without leaving ſo much as one Grain behind him. He carried away the Golden Shields and Bucklers that *Solomon* had cauſed to be made, with the Golden Quivers that *David* took, and dedicated to the adorning of the Temple.

After which *Shiſhak* returned to *Egypt*, with a prodigious Booty *.

After the Departure of *Shiſhak* in-

(*c*) Deſpair. An unfeigned Sorrow, and hearty Contrition for Sin, is an effectual Method of averting the Vengeance of that gracious Deity, who delights to ſave rather than deſtroy, and is ever ready to forgive the Sins of all them that are penitent.

And this merciful Diſpoſition theſe *Iſraelites* now happily experienced; for he was pleaſed to accept their ſincere Humiliation and Promiſe of Amendment, and to reſpite the ſevereſt Part of that Puniſhment which would otherwiſe have been inflicted upon them.

* *Herodotus* of *Halicarnaſſaus* takes Notice of this Expedition, only miſtaking the Name, where he ſpeaks of the King of *Egypt*'s March thorough ſeveral other Countries, and of ſubduing the *Paleſtine-Syria* without ſtriking a Stroke.

Now this can only be underſtood of the Conqueſt of the Country by the *Egyptians*; for he ſpeaks of ſeveral Pillars erected and left there, with the Images of Men cut upon them, with the privy Parts of Women, as an Emblematical Way of ſtigmatizing the Men for giving up their Country without a Blow.

Now this *Rehoboam* was undoubtedly the King of *Iſrael*, that gave up all for the aſking. He ſays likewiſe, that the *Ethiopians* took up the Cuſtom of Circumciſing from the *Egyptians*.

It is agreed on all Hands, that the *Philiſtines* and the *Paleſtine-Syrians* had it from thence; and it is as clear, that there are no other People in *Paleſtine-Syria* circumciſed, but the *Iſraelites*. But this is ſubmitted to every Perſon's private Determination.

(*d*) Shields,

to *Egypt*, *Reboboam* repaired the Loſs of the Golden *(d)* Shields and Bucklers, with the ſame Number of Braſs, and committed the Care of them to his proper Officers and Guards, and then betook himſelf to a Life of Retirement, reſigning every public Concern, fearing leſt the continual Feuds between *Jeroboam* and himſelf might, in the End, prove deſtructive to him.

He was a weak and arrogant Prince, and loſt, thro' his own Miſconduct, his Government and his Reputation. He was buried at *Jeruſalem*, among the Kings; and his Son *Abijah* ſucceeded him, in the eighteenth Year of *Jeroboam*'s Reign over the ten Tribes.

Having related the moſt memorable Tranſactions of the Life of *Reboboam*, we follow the Account of the ſacred Hiſtorian, in preſenting an Account of God's dealing with *Jeroboam*, who cauſed the *Iſraelites* to run into moſt enormous Idolatries, and every abominable Practice, in the Sight of their God and mighty Deliverer; a Conduct which brought on him the juſt Vengeance of Heaven.

It happened at this Time that *Abijah*, his Son falling ſick, he bad his Wife put herſelf in the *(e)* Diſguiſe of a private Perſon, and go to *Abijah* the Prophet, a Man filled with the Spirit of Prediction, and a Perſon who told him formerly, that he himſelf ſhould be King. *Go you*, ſays he, *to this Prophet, and aſk him if the Boy ſhall recover or no.* She dreſſed herſelf according to her Huſband's Order, and went to *Shiloh*, where *Abijah* at that Time lived.

As ſhe was upon the Way, a Voice from Heaven ſpoke to the Prophet, (who was now dim-ſighted with Age) informing him that the Wife of *Jeroboam* was then coming to him; and of her Buſineſs, what Queſtions ſhe would aſk him, and what he ſhould anſwer. Upon her coming to the Door in the Dreſs of an ordinary Gueſt, the Prophet called to her by

(d) Shields. This ſhews to what a low Condition the Kingdom of *Judah* was reduced. Theſe Shields were a Matter of State and Grandeur; and therefore it was neceſſary, if poſſible, to have them of the ſame Value, that they were before; and as they were carried before the King to the Houſe of the Lord, it ſeemed likewiſe to be a Matter of Religion that their Value ſhould not be diminiſhed. Now in making theſe three hundred Shields we are told three Pounds of Gold went to one Shield: This, at four Pounds per Ounce, amounts to no more than forty three thouſand two hundred Pounds; and therefore it was a miſerable Caſe, that they were reduced from ſo much Wealth to ſo much Poverty, that neither Reaſons of State nor Religion, could raiſe ſo ſmall a Sum on ſo great an Occaſion.

(e) Diſguiſe. There might be ſeveral very ſubſtantial Reaſons for *Jeroboam*'s deſiring his Wife to diſguiſe herſelf on this Occaſion, but the principal one ſeems to have been, to conceal from his People, his Diſtruſt of the Idols he had introduced among them, which, if they had once came to the Knowledge of, the Conſequence might have proved fatal to him.

His Policy, however, was but ſhallow, and his Infatuation very great, to imagine that the Perſon whom he looked upon as capable to foretel the Fate of his Son, ſhould not be able to diſcover his Wife, notwithſtanding the moſt artful Diſguiſe.

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the Name of *Jeroboam*'s Wife, and thus addreſſed her, *Come in, and ſeek not to diſguiſe yourſelf; for he that told me who you are, and put the Words in my Mouth, that I am to ſay to you, is not to be impoſed upon.*

Go therefore to your Huſband from me, and tell him, that thus ſaith the Lord God; As it was I that raiſed thee out of a low Condition to the Dignity of a Throne; and cutting off the Family of David *from the Kingdom, gave it to thee: So on the other Hand, in return for all theſe Bounties and Benefits, thou haſt now moſt ungratefully caſt off him that exalted thee, and ſet up Gods of thine own Fancy, and of the Founder's Making, in Preference to the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and in Contempt of my Majeſty and Power; wherefore I will now forthwith expunge thee and thy Family out of the Roll of Mankind, give your Carcaſes to the Dogs, and to the Fowls of the Air; and ſet up another King over my People, that ſhall not leave one living Man of the Houſe of* Jeroboam *upon the Face of the Earth; and the very Multitude ſhall not eſcape the Stroke of Divine Juſtice neither. For they ſhall be extirminated out of the good Land they were poſſeſſed of, and driven away, and diſperſed beyond the* Euphrates; *for being wicked, after their King's Example, in adoring his Gods, to the Contempt of me, and my Commandments.*

Make haſte therefore to your Huſband, and tell him as I have told you. As for your Child, on your Return you ſhall find it dead; for the very Moment you enter the City, he ſhall breathe his laſt. He ſhall be lamented and buried with the Solemnity of a publick Mourning, as the only Perſon of Jeroboam's *Family that had any thing good in him.*

The Woman haſtened away terribly alarmed at what ſhe had heard, and bewailing the Loſs of her Son all the Way ſhe paſſed, repaired to her Huſband, and found the Child dead, as the Prophet foretold, and gave her Huſband an Account of the terrible Tidings he had ſolemnly recounted.

Notwithſtanding the awful Predictions from the Prophet of the Lord, the perverſe *Jeroboam*, as if in Defiance of the Moſt High, aſſembled Forces throughout all his Dominions, and marched againſt *Abijah*, the Son of *Reboboam*, who was the King of the two Tribes in Right of his Father. Confident of his Succeſs, againſt a Prince of ſo little Experience, either in Government or Arms.

But *Abijah* was ſo far from being terrified at this Preparation, that he raiſed an Army of the two Tribes, and advanced with it toward *Jeroboam*, in a certain Place called *Mount Temarin*, and there encamped, and prepared for Battle.

His Army conſiſted of four hundred thouſand Men, and *Jeroboam*'s double that Number. The two Armies were both drawn up, and ready to engage, *Abijah* advanced to a little Eminence; and from thence held up his Hand to obtain a Silence and Attention to what he had to ſay; the Sum of which was this:

You cannot be ignorant of God's Promiſes, that this Kingdom ſhould be continued to David *and his Poſterity for many Ages.*

Now, this being the Caſe, I cannot but wonder to ſee my Father deſerted, Jeroboam, *his Subject, advanced to his Place, and you yourſelves in Arms againſt the Divine Right of Government ſettled by God himſelf; and not content with that neither, unleſs you can force the right Heir out of the ſmall Remainder that is left him, when* Jeroboam *hath already by Violence and Uſurpation engroſſed the greater Part of the Kingdom.*

But he is not long to enjoy the Fruit of his Wickedneſs; for God will call him to a ſevere Account for his Iniquities, and to put an End to this Courſe of Rapine and Oppreſſion, which he himſelf is ſo far from doing, that he makes it his Daily Buſineſs to continue and enflame a moſt impious Sedition; and what was the true Ground and Reaſon of this Defection? My Father never did you any Injury, only by the Advice of evil Counſel, Jeroboam *himſelf being in the Bottom of it, he had the Misfortune to give you an Anſwer expreſſed in Terms too harſh; upon which you all in great Rage abandoned your Duty, not only to my Father, but to your God, and to his Laws, and all Things that are ſacred.*

You ſhould have weighed Matters with Allowances for human Frailty; you ſhould have conſidered that my Father was a young Man, and one that did not ſet up for an Orator: You ſhould have conſidered him again as the Son of Solomon, your royal Patron and Benefactor.

Now theſe Conſiderations might have atoned for a few unguarded Expreſſions; and it would have been but Reaſon to have borne a little with the Son, for the Father's Sake. But theſe Thoughts never came near your Hearts, nor are they ever like to do, if I may judge by the Army that is advancing againſt us. And what have you to truſt to? If in your Golden Calves, your Altars, and your High-Places, it is not your Religion that you depend upon, but your Wickedneſs. Beſides that, you have the Laws of God and Man to contend withal.

Piety and Juſtice will overcome you in the Concluſion. You manifeſtly fight againſt both, in this Cauſe, in fighting againſt us, who have conſtantly aſſerted the Worſhip and the Reverence that we owe to the true God. Not a God of Wood, or Stone, or the Impoſture of a wicked King upon a credulous Multitude; but God the Maker of all Things, the Beginning and the End. Wherefore let me adviſe you to repent of your paſt Sins and Follies, and to betake yourſelf to ſounder Counſels for the future: Or if you muſt be contending, let it be for the Defence of, and not in Oppoſition to, thoſe Laws that have made you ſo great and happy.

While *Abijah* was thus piouſly haranguing the Multitude, *Jeroboam* perfidiouſly ſent a Detachment to ſurprize his *(f)* Rear, but his Stratagem ſucceeded not; for *Abijah* perceiving

(f) His Rear. Though *Jeroboam* did not attempt to anſwer the Speech of *Abijah*, yet he

their Amazement, exhorted them to rely on the mighty God of *Iſrael*, nor fear the Power or Policy of an Idolatrous Foe.

Theſe Words of their King diſſipated their Fears, and inſpired them with Courage and Reſolution; whereupon, having firſt invoked the Aſſiſtance of God Almighty, the Prieſts ſounded the Charge; at which, with a mighty Shout, they attacked the Enemy, and charged them ſo vigorouſly, that with the Help of God, they put them to a total Rout, and made ſuch a Slaughter, as cannot be paralleled in Hiſtory, Sacred or Profane.

There was five hundred thouſand Men ſlain upon the Place, a Victory never to be forgotten. Their ſtrongeſt Towns were taken and plundered, *Bethel* and *Ephrain*, with their Dependencies.

This Blow ſo weakened *Jeroboam*, that he was never able to make any farther Attempt, ſo long as *Abijah* was living, who died ſoon after, in the third Year of his Reign, and was buried at *Jeruſalem*, in the Sepulchre of his Anceſtors. He left two and twenty Sons, and ſixteen Daughters, all which he had by fourteen Women.

Aſa his Son ſucceeded him, whoſe Mother's Name was *Maacha*; and under his Government the *Iſraelites* enjoyed a ten Year's Peace.

This is the Subſtance of what is recorded in ſacred Hiſtory concerning *Abijah*, who was ſoon followed in the Path of Mortality by *Jeroboam*, the King of the ten Tribes, in the ſecond Year of the Reign of *Aſa*, and the twenty-ſecond of his own.

His Son *Nadab* who ſucceeded him, lived in a Kind of Competition for Profaneneſs and Impiety, with the Character of his Father, and reigned only two Years; in which Time he led out an Army againſt *Gibbethon*, a City of the *Philiſtines*, being poſſeſſed with an Opinion that he might take it by a Siege; but in the mean Time he was cut off by the Treachery of a familiar Friend, whoſe Name was *Baaſha*, who ſeized upon the Government, and deſtroyed the whole Family; which verified the Words of the Prophet, *That the Dogs ſhould eat him of* Jeroboam's *Stock, that died in the City, and the Fowls of the Air ſhould eat him that died in the Field.*

This was the End of *Jeroboam* and his Family, for their Apoſtacy from the Lord their Maker.

CHAP.

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was certainly touched with it; and being fearful that it might have ſuch an Effect upon his Troops as to make them decline the Battle had they been regularly led on to the Charge, he had recourſe to Stratagem, and endeavoured to compaſs that by Artifice, which he was apprehenſive of failing in, from the Uſe of fair and honourable Methods.

CHAP. V.

Amiable Character of King Aſa. *Is proſpered by God in his military Undertakings. God's Judgment on* Baaſha, *King of* Iſrael. Zimri's *Conſpiracy againſt his Son and Succeſſor. Wicked* Ahab *ſucceeds to the Throne of* Iſrael. *His Ruin foretold by a Prophet.* Naboth *ſlain at the Inſtance of* Jezabel. *The Prophet again predicts the Deſtruction of* Ahab, *whoſe Repentance reſpites Part of the Vengeance, till the Days of his Son.*

KING *Aſa*, poſſeſſed with a holy Awe of the Majeſty of the great God, the mighty Deliverer of *Iſrael*, acted in ſtrict Conformity to his holy Will, and was a ſhining Example of Piety and Juſtice to all his Subjects.

He rectified all that he found amiſs in his Government, purged his Dominions from all extravagant Luſts and foreign Abominations.

He had a ſelect Body of Men armed with Lances and Shields, to the Number of three hundred thouſand of the Tribe of *Judah*; and of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, he had two hundred and fourſcore thouſand, with Bows and Bucklers.

In the tenth Year of his Reign, *Zarah*, a King of *Ethiopia*, marched againſt him with an Army of nine hundred thouſand Foot, one hundred thouſand Horſe, and three hundred Chariots.

When he was advanced as far as *Mareſhah*, a City in the Dependency of *Judah*, *Aſa* went out to meet him, and ranged his Army not far from the City, in a certain Valley called *Zephathah*.

Upon the Sight of ſo prodigious a Multitude, *Aſa* called out to God for his Aſſiſtance, that he would vouchſafe to proſper his Arms, and give him Victory over ſo formidable an Enemy; for it was wholly in a Dependence upon his divine Goodneſs, that he had now undertaken this Enterprize; concluding with an Ejaculation, That he wholly reſigned himſelf to his bleſſed Will, whoſe Power was more than ſufficient to ſupply the Want either of Strength or Number.

Upon this Prayer of *Aſa*'s, God was pleaſed to encourage him with a Token and Aſſurance of Victory.

In the divine Strength, *Aſa* charged the Enemy with ſuch Bravery, that with great Slaughter he purſued them to the Plain of *Gerar*; and there deſiſting from the Purſuit, he rifled *Gerar* itſelf, and likewiſe the Enemy's Camp, from which he took a vaſt Booty in Gold, Camels, Flocks and Herds.

Upon gaining this mighty Victory, through the Goodneſs of divine Providence, the King returned with his Army to *Jeruſalem*, laden with Spoil.

On their return home, *Aſa* was met by the Prophet *Azariah*, who thus addreſſed him with all the People.

God hath been pleaſed to bleſs you with this glorious Victory, in Conſideration of your Juſtice, your Piety and Obe-

Obedience to his Will and Commandments; and if you go on, as you have begun, you may expect the ſame providential Advantages, in all your Affairs for the Time to come.

But if ever you depart from the Precepts of your God, you will find in all Reſpects the contrary. And that the Time will come, wherein there ſhall not be a true Prophet among you, nor a Prieſt anſwerable to the Dignity of his Function.

Your Cities ſhall be laid level with the Ground; your Nation ſcattered like Vagabonds over the Earth, without any Seat or Habitation that they can call their own. Wherefore let me adviſe you, while you have Time, to apply yourſelves to the Study and Practice of the good and acceptable Pleaſure of the Lord. And finally to join with Thankſgiving in the Acknowledgment and Enjoyment of the Bleſſings of God's Favour.

Theſe Words of the Prophet did greatly rejoice the Hearts, both of the King and People, who thereupon attended to the Advice of the Prophet, carefully obſerving every Ordinance and Precept of the Lord their God. And the King, gave a full and expreſs Order for the utter Demolition of all Idols, through *Judea* and *Benjamin*, and the Cities he had conquered, as well as repaired the Altar and Temple of the only true God.

Having thus conſidered the Character and Adminiſtration of *Aſa*, King of the two Tribes, we proceed to *Baaſha*, King of the *Iſraelites*; who, when he had killed *Nadab*, the Son of *Jeroboam*, ſeized his Kingdom.

This Prince reigned four Years, and his Palace was in *Tirzah*, in all Sorts of Lewdneſs and Impiety; he went beyond either *Jeroboam* or his Son. A tyrannical Oppreſſor of his People, and of a ſtubborn and contumacious Spirit toward God himſelf; inſomuch that the Word of the Lord came to *Jehu* the Prophet, commanding him to tell *Baaſha*, *That God had fully determined to root out him and his Family from off the Earth, as he had done Jeroboam before him, for his Ingratitude to that Power and Goodneſs that raiſed him to the Throne, and for his Tyranny and Impiety in the Exerciſe of his Government, without any Regard to Righteouſneſs or Juſtice; two Virtues that are above all others the moſt acceptable to God, and profitable to the People.*

Alſo informing him farther, that ſince he thought fit to make Jeroboam *his Example, for all Manner of Iniquity, it was but reaſonable that he ſhould reſemble him, in his Miſery and Puniſhment,*

Baaſha, after theſe awful Denunciations, obſtinately perſiſted, as if reſolved to affront his Maker, and as if the Prophet had rather promiſed him a Reward for his Wickedneſs, than threatened him with ſo dreadful a Vengeance, ſtriving daily to exceed in Impiety and Profaneneſs, heaping Sins upon Sins, without any Care or Thought how to avert the Judgment, and reconcile himſelf to

God; nay, without the leaſt Diſpoſition towards Amendment or Repentance. In the Concluſion, he marched with an Army to *Ramah*, a Place of ſome Note, about forty furlongs, or four *Engliſh* Miles from *Jeruſalem*. He took it, and fortified it, with an Intent to make it the Seat of the War, as a commodious Station for the Advantage of many Inroads into the Dominions of *Aſa*.

Now *Aſa* was not without ſome Apprehenſion of his Deſign; and reflecting with himſelf, how great Danger the neighbourhood of ſo powerful an Army might bring upon his Country, he diſpatched Embaſſadors to the King of *Damaſcus*, with Money and Preſents, inviting him over to his Alliance, out of Reſpect to the former Friendſhip that had ſubſiſted betwixt thoſe two Families.

The King willingly received the Money and the Preſents; broke off with *Baaſha*, entered into a League with *Aſa*, and ſent an Army ſoon after into the Territory of *Baaſha*, fell upon his Towns and ſtrong Holds, burning ſome, and rifling others; as *Ijon*, *Dan*, and *Abel-beth-maachah*.

Upon the News of this Incurſion, the King of the *Iſraelites* quitted *Ramah*, and proceeded nearer Home; but *Aſa* erected two ſtrong Towns there, out of the Materials that *Baaſha* had left behind him; calling the one *Geba*, and the other *Mizpah*.

This was the laſt of *Baaſha*'s Military Adventures; for he was cut off by *Creon*, and buried in the City of *Arſanes*, and his Son *Elah* ſucceeding him; he himſelf being afterwards treacherouſly ſlain by *Zimri*, the Maſter of one Diviſion of his Horſe, in the ſecond Year of his Reign, as he was drinking with *Arza*, the Steward of his Houſe, a Troop of Horſe breaking in upon him, in the Abſence of his Guards and Officers, who were then abroad at the Siege of *Gibbethon*, a City of the *Philiſtians*.

Zimri, after this Exploit, advanced himſelf from Maſter of the Horſe to the Throne; and according to the Prediction of *Jehu*, totally extinguiſhed the Race of *Baaſha*, which was utterly rooted out for their Wickedneſs, after the Method of the Deſtruction that befel *Jeroboam*.

The News of the King's Death coming to *Gibbethon*, when the Army was before the Town, and that *Zimri*, the Aſſaſſin, had taken the Government to himſelf, the Army choſe *Omri* the Captain of the Guards for their King, who raiſed the Siege, and immediately attacked *Tirzah*, and took it by Storm.

Zimri finding the City without a Guard, withdraws himſelf into a private Apartment in the Palace, ſets fire to it, and burns himſelf and the Houſe together, in the ſeventh Day of his Reign.

All Things were now in a Confuſion, and the People immediately divided into two Factions, the one for *Tibni*, and the other for *Omri*; but the latter carried it; for *Tibni* was ſlain, and *Omri* had the whole Government to himſelf.

This was in the thirteenth Year of the Reign of *Aſa*; and *Omni* governed

ed twelve Years, ſix at *Tirzah* and the reſt at *Shemer*, which the *Greeks* call *Samaria*. He gave it the Name of *Samaria* from the Man's Name that ſold the Mountain, whereupon it was built.

He differed little from the former Kings; for they all made it their Buſineſs to alienate the People's Hearts from the Love and Service of God, by the repeated Practices of every Abomination; wherefore God, in his Wrath, made Uſe of them ſucceſſively for the Deſtruction of one another, till, in the End, the whole Race was extinct.

This Prince died at *Samaria*, and *Ahab* his Son reigned in his Stead.

In the Courſe of this Hiſtory, the Wiſdom and Juſtice of an All-ſeeing, All-wiſe God, are manifeſtly diſplayed in diſcovering the Sins of the Wicked and Obedience of the Righteous; and alſo in the Puniſhment of the former, and Reward of the latter; for the Kings of the *Iſraelites* were in a ſhort Time cut off, with their whole Families, by the Hands of one another; only *Aſa*, King of *Jeruſalem*, and of the two Tribes lived happily, and in the Favour of God, to a great Age, in Conſideration of his Piety and Juſtice; and after a Reign of one and forty Years, departed this Life with Comfort.

His Son *Jehoſhaphat*, that he had by *Abida*, ſucceeded him, imitated his Father in a pious Obedience to the divine Commands, and righteous Adminiſtration towards his People, propoſing the Conduct of holy *David*, as his higheſt and invariable Example.

Ahab, King of the *Iſraelites*, fixed his Reſidence at *Samaria*, where he ruled two and twenty Years, without any Innovation in the Government. He followed the Steps of the worſt of his Predeceſſors, and moſt particularly of *Jeroboam*, not only in worſhipping golden Calves, but in multiplying all Manner of heinous Offences.

He took to Wife *Jezebel*, the Daughter of *Ethbaal*, the King of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, who drew him over to the Idolatry of her Country. She was a Woman of a raſh enterprizing Temper, and of ſo impetuous and ungovernable Spirit, that ſhe had the Confidence to erect a Temple to *Baal*, the God of the *Tyrians*; to plant Groves for Superſtition, of all Sorts of Trees and to appoint her Prieſts and falſe Prophets expreſly for that idolatrous Sevice.

Such Perſons and Practices were well-pleaſing to *Ahab*, who was diſpoſed for the Commiſſion of any heinous Offence, and exceeded in Wickedneſs of all his Predeceſſors. There came to *Ahab*, about that Time, a certain Prophet, whoſe Name was *Elijah* a *Tiſhbite*, and born in the City of *Gilead*. His Meſſage was to tell the King, That from the time of his going away, here ſhould not be one Drop of Rain, or ſo much as the leaſt Sign of a Dew in that Province, till his Return; confirming his Prediction with a ſtrong Affirmation that it ſhould be ſo.

As ſoon as he had delivered his Errand, he went away to the Southward, till he came to a Torrent, where

where he might ſupply himſelf with Water, and there he ſtopped for the preſent; the Ravens, Time after Time, bringing him a Supply of Meat.

The Drought continuing and encreaſing, the Channel was dried up; whereupon God warned the Prophet to remove to *Zarephath*, which is a Town betwixt *Tyre* and *Sidon*; a Voice from Heaven foretelling him, That he ſhould find a Widow Woman there, who would feed and provide for him.

He followed his Order, and being come almoſt to the End of his Journey, ſaw a poor Woman gathering Sticks, not far from the Port. This Woman he underſtood, by a divine Impulſe, was to be his Nurſe, ſo he called to her to give him a little Water to drink; and as ſhe was going to fetch it, he ſpoke to her again to bring him a little Bread too. The Woman ſolemnly proteſted to him, that ſhe had nothing in the Houſe, but one Handful of Meal, and a little Oil, and that ſhe was now getting a few Sticks for a Fire to bake a Cake for herſelf and her Son; and when that was eaten, they muſt even ſtarve, it being her all.

But the Prophet encouraged her with theſe Words; *Go thy Ways with a good Heart, and hope for better Things, and bring me a Piece of it when it is ready; for I do aſſure thee, that when we have all eaten our Fill, thy Barrel ſhall never be without Meal, nor thy Cruiſe without Oil, till God ſhall ſend Rain upon the Earth.*

The Woman did as the Prophet bad her, and found his Words to be true; for they had all three Suſtenance ſufficient, and the Proviſion was ſtill recruited again as it waſted, till this miſerable Drought was over.*

About this Time the Woman's Son of the Houſe fell deſperately Sick; and the Mother, in a paſſionate Rage, for the Loſs of her Boy, laid the Blame upon the Prophet, exclaiming, *This Man, that I have entertained, hath diſcovered my Sins, and now brought this Judgment upon me.*

The Child being abſolutely given over for dead, the Prophet bad the Woman comfort herſelf, and deliver up her Son into his Arms, with an Aſſurance that he would ſuddenly reſtore him to her alive again. He took him up, and carried him into his Chamber, laid him upon his Bed, and offered up this Prayer to God for him. *O Lord be pleaſed, in thy infinite Goodneſs, to reſtore this innocent Creature to Life again.*

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* *Mænander* ſpeaks of it in the Hiſtory of *Ithobal*, a King of the *Tyrians*. "In his Time, ſays he, there was an extreme Drought for Want of Rain, that laſted from the Month of *Hyperberetæus*, till the ſame Month again next Year.

There were Prayers indeed put up for the averting of the Judgment, which were followed with mighty Claps of Thunder.

This Prince built Botrys in *Phænicia*, and *Auzates* in *Africa*."

This was undoubtedly the Drought under *Ahab*; for it was in his Reign that *Ithobal* was King of *Tyre*, as *Mænander* has it in his Commentaries.

ELIJAH *fed by* RAVENS, I Kings XVII, 6.

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God was pleaſed upon the Prophet's Supplication, beyond all Thought or Expectation, to reſtore the Child to Life again, that the poor Woman might not have any Misfortune to complain of while the Prophet was in the Family. The Child, upon his Prayer, was revived, and the Woman with great Thankfulneſs to the Prophet, found herſelf now fully convinced, that he was authoriſed and directed by the Spirit of God.

The Prophet, ſoon after this, by the Commandment of God, was ſent to *Ahab*, to tell him that there ſhould ſuddenly be Rain. The Famine having prevailed ſo long throughout the Country, there was ſo general a Scarcity of all Neceſſaries of Life, that not only the People were ready to ſtarve for want of Bread, but the very Cattle alſo, for Want of Forage; ſo parching was the Drought.

In this Diſtreſs the King ſent for *Obadiah*, the Overſeer of his Stables and Grounds, and commanded him to ſearch every where about the Brooks and Rivers for Graſs for his Horſes and Herds; charging him by all Means to get *Elijah* the Prophet to him, whom they had long ſought moſt earneſtly. Having delivered this Charge, *Ahab* proceeded one Way and *Obadiah* another, in queſt of the Prophet.

Now *Obadiah* was a good and holy Man; who at the Time when Queen *Jezabel* was in the Heat of her bloody Perſecution againſt the Prophets, concealed and protected a Hundred of them in Caves, and fed them with Bread and Water. The King and *Obadiah* were no ſooner parted, but the latter met *Elijah* upon the Way; and finding who he was, by his anſwering a Queſtion propoſed to him, did him Reverence. The Prophet after a-while, deſired *Obadiah* to go to the King, and tell him that he was coming.

Obadiah, aſtoniſhed at the Command, and fearful of *Ahab*'s Reſentment, then expoſtulated with him, "*What have I done, to be ſent of ſuch an Errand, to a Perſon that is at this Time ſeeking you to put you to Death, and there is no Torment you are not to expect when he catches you? But what, when I go to the King, if the Spirit that governs you, ſhould carry you another Way, and when you are not to be found, my Head may lie at Stake to anſwer for you? Therefore be not ſo indifferent in a Caſe where my Life is in ſo much Danger. You may aſſure yourſelf, I do not want Affection for your Party, that ran the Riſque of preſerving a Hundred of your Prophets from the Rage of* Jezebel, *and to this Day maintain them in Caves upon my own Account.* The Prophet thus baniſhed the Fear of pious *Obadiah* by theſe Words: *Well, fear nothing; but go to the King, upon my ſolemn Oath, and promiſe that I will come to him.* As ſoon as *Ahab* underſtood that *Elijah* was there, he mended his Pace, and in Indignation, advancing toward him, called out; *Are you, at this Day the Troubler of* Iſrael? *Are you the Occaſion of this Drought and Famine?*

Elijah told him, that it was *Ahab*,

and his Family, and their bringing in foreign and falſe Gods, and the ſuppreſſing of the Worſhip of the true God, that was the Cauſe of all their Miſery. He then, to confirm his Declaration, propoſed to him this Direction; *Give Order for all the People upon Mount* Carmel, *and let your own and your Wife's Prophets be there alſo, (expreſſing the very Number of them.) Summon likewiſe the Prophets of your Groves, who are about four Hundred.* The King ſummoned them, and they met accordingly; *Elijah*, ſtanding in the Midſt of the Throng, addreſſed them in this Manner:

How long will you ſtand wavering between two Opinions. If you believe ours to be the true and the only God, obey him, and keep his Commandments; or if you are rather of Opinion for the worſhipping of ſtrange Gods, adhere to them only. The People making no Anſwer, *Elijah* proceeded to this Challenge. *If you chuſe to be certainly aſſured which Worſhip is the right, here do I ſtand, a ſingle Prophet on the one Side, to defend the Cauſe againſt the four Hundred on the other. I will take an Ox and lay it upon a Pile of Wood, without putting any Fire to it; let them do the ſame Thing, and call upon their Gods to ſet their Pile in a Flame. By this Means you will be able to diſtinguiſh the True from the Falſe.*

The People were well pleaſed with the Experiment propoſed, and *Elijah* bad *Ahab*'s Prophets take an Ox, and call upon their Gods by their Names, giving them the Precedency in offering up the Sacrifice. When they had prayed, and called ſome Time upon their Gods without any Effect, *Elijah* turned their Superſtition to Ridicule, and bad them cry out louder, intimating their Gods might poſſibly be upon a Journey, or aſleep. Thus ſtimulated, they continued their Outcries and Exclamations, from Morning till Noon, cutting and lancing their Bodies, after their Cuſtom of worſhipping, and to no Manner of Purpoſe.

But when it came to the other's Turn to ſacrifice, and theſe fanatical Prieſts were ordered to retire, *Elijah* ſpoke to the Multitude to draw nearer, and examine every where if they could find any Fire that was ſecretly conveyed for the Execution of his Propoſal. Upon their Approach, *Elijah* took twelve Stones, to anſwer the Number of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*, and erected an Altar out of them, cutting a deep Ditch about it. The Wood was fitted, and laid upon the Altar; the Sacrifice upon the Pile, and four Veſſels of Spring Water caſt upon the Altar; ſo that it ran off, and filled the Trenches.

When every Thing was ready the Prophet *Elijah* called upon God, and beſought him to ſhew his Power now for the Conviction of a miſtaken and unbelieving People. While the Words were yet between the Lips, there fell a Fire, as from Heaven, upon the Altar, that in the Sight of the People conſumed the Sacrifice, and dried up all the Water about the Altar, and in the Ditch.

The *Iſraelites*, upon this Prodigy, fell

fell proſtrate upon the Ground, and agreed in the Adoration of one Lord; confeſſing him to be the great and only true God; and that the reſt were only the vain Imaginations of weak Men.

The four Hundred Prophets were taken, and put to Death by the Command of *Elijah*, who then bad the King to go and take Refreſhment, for that Rain would ſoon fall in Abundance, without troubling himſelf any farther.

When the King was gone, *Elijah* went up to the Top of *Mount Carmel*, where he ſat down upon the Ground, and laying his Head upon his Knees, ordered his Servant to go up to a Rock toward the Sea, and look about him, if he could ſee a Cloud. He went up again and again, but ſtill ſaw nothing; at laſt, after the ſeventh Time, looking about him, he ſaid he ſaw ſomething blackiſh in the Air, about the Size of a Man's Hand. As ſoon as the Prophet heard that, he ſent away immediately to *Ahab*, to haſten to the City, leſt he ſhould be taken in a very great Shower; and by the Time he was come to the City of *Jezreel*, the whole Air was dark and overcaſt, and there fell immediately a very heavy Rain. The Prophet, in the mean Time, by the ſpecial Aſſiſtance of God, ran before *Ahab*'s Chariot, till he came to *Jezreel*.

When the mighty Wonders, that *Elijah* had performed, and particularly his having cauſed her Prophets to be ſlain, reached the Ears of the haughty *Jezebel*, ſhe ſent him threatening Meſſages, that his Life ſhould anſwer for theirs. *Elijah*, upon theſe Menaces, fled to *Beerſheba*, which is in the fartheſt Part of *Judea*, and there leaving his Servant, went away into the Wilderneſs, where he laid himſelf down, as a Man weary of Life, and thus called upon God: *Lord, I am not better than thoſe that are gone before me; and I find no Temptations left me to deſire longer Life.*

Laying himſelf down under a Tree, he there fell aſleep, till ſomebody awaken'd him, he knew not by what Means, nor what Cauſe; but upon raiſing himſelf, found Meat and Drink ſet before him, upon which he fed heartily; and in the Strength of that Refreſhment, he went forward to Mount *Horeb*, the Place where God delivered the Law to *Moſes*. There was a large convenient Cave there, which he entered into, with ſome Thought of taking it up for his Habitation. While he was there, the Queſtion was put to him, how he came to leave the City, and wander thus in the Deſart.

He heard the Voice diſtinctly, but whence it came he knew not. His Anſwer was, that upon the killing of the falſe Prophets, and preaching the Doctrine to the People of only one God, and that God only to be worſhipped, the Queen for this Crime threatened to have him put to Death.

He was commanded after this, by the ſame Voice, to quit the Cavern the

the next Day, and receive his Inſtructions how to govern himſelf for the future.

The Day following he came out from his Retreat, and immediately there was a great Earthquake; and after the Earthquake, the Appearance in the Air of a blazing Fire, which Fire was followed with a little Pauſe of Silence; and after that, a *(a)* ſtill Voice, bidding him fear nothing, for his Enemies ſhould not prevail againſt him; and ſo commanded him back again, by the Way of *Damaſcus*, and there to anoint *Hazael*, King of *Syria*, and *Jehu*, the Son of *Nimſhi*, King over *Iſrael*; and to anoint *Eliſha* alſo, of *Abel-meholah*, Prophet in his Room; for that God was reſolved to root out all the Wicked from the Land, by the Strokes of Divine Juſtice; and thoſe that eſcaped the Sword of *Jehu* ſhould fall by that of *Hazael*.

Elijah returned, according to his Order, and found *Eliſha*, the Son of *Shaphat*, plowing, in Company, with twelve Yoke of Oxen. He went to him, and caſting his Cloak over him, *Eliſha* immediately began to propheſy, quitted his Oxen, and followed him, only deſiring to take Leave of his Father and Mother before he departed.

This was granted him; and upon his Return from his Parents, he became thenceforward a Diſciple and Companion to *Elijah*.

It happened that one *Naboth* of *Jezreel* had a Vineyard near the Palace of *Ahab*, King of *Samaria*, which lay contiguous to the King's Grounds. *Ahab* had a great Deſire to encloſe this Parcel of Ground within his own Gardens, and often ſolicited *Naboth* to have it, either in Exchange for ſome Equivalent in another Place; or otherwiſe, for a Sum of Money.

Naboth excuſed himſelf, by alledging, That it being his Inheritance, and in ſo particular a Manner the Gift of Providence, he preferred it to any other the King could beſtow upon him, and that on any Terms he did not care to part with it.

This Diſappointment of his Deſire, on another Man's Eſtate, was as grievous to *Ahab* as if he had loſt his own; inſomuch that he fell melancholy upon it, refuſing to bathe as he was accuſtomed to do, and neglecting his Meals.

Jezebel, upon this Change, became very ſolicitous and inquiſitive to know the Cauſe of ſo wonderful an Alteration, that her Huſband ſhould on a ſudden leave off bathing as he uſed to do, and forſake his Food; ſo that upon her Importu-

(a) Still Voice. The Generality of Interpreters have conſidered this Paſſage as a figurative Deſcription, and with no great Impropriety, I think; for, after the Fire, that is, after the Storms, Thunders, Lightning, and Earthquakes, which attended the Promulgation of the Law: Came a ſtill Voice, that is, the Goſpel, wherein God ſpoke to us by his Son, with the greateſt Lenity and Sweetneſs, uſing the moſt convincing Arguments, and the moſt ſoft and gentle Perſuaſion.

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nity, he told her the Story of *Naboth*, and how contemptuouſly he had behaved himſelf; informing her farther, in theſe Words, *I gave him the moſt courteous Words, and in Truth treated him, even below the Majeſty of a King; for which Civility I was put off with a flat Denial.*

The Queen, on the other Side, bad him be of good Cheer, and give himſelf no farther Uneaſineſs upon that Account, for ſhe would undertake to effect the Matter herſelf, and make *Naboth* ſeverely ſuffer for the Affront.

Upon this, ſhe wrote Letters in *Ahab*'s Name to the Elders and chief Men of *Jezreel*, to this Purpoſe, *That they ſhould proclaim a Faſt, call an Aſſembly, and Aſſign* Naboth, *upon Account of his Extraction, a Place among the principal Men of the People; that they ſhould have two Witneſſes ready, who would ſwear any thing, to give Evidence againſt him, for ſpeaking Blaſphemy againſt God and the King; upon which Teſtimony he ſhould ſtand convicted, and receive Sentence to be ſtoned to Death by the People.*

Every Thing was done according to the Queen's Direction, and *Naboth* convicted, ſentenced, and ſtoned to Death.

Jezebel inſtantly upon the News of this Succeſs, went to the King, and told him, that *Naboth*'s Work was now done, and that he might take Poſſeſſion of the Vineyard when he pleaſed, without putting himſelf to the Expence of Purchaſing it.

Ahab was ſo overjoyed at what *Jezebel* told him, that the firſt Thing he did was to take a Journey to his new Purchaſe.

But God ſent *Elijah* to him in his Wrath, to charge him with the Murder of the Owner of that Vineyard, and the Iniquity of his uſurping the Poſſeſſion.

When *Ahab* ſaw the Prophet coming toward him, he went to him with a voluntary Confeſſion, and a Tender of any Satisfaction the Prophet ſhould require. This he did to prevent the other's taxing him with the Fact.

Elijah told him, *That where the Dogs licked the Blood of* Naboth, *they ſhould alſo lick the Blood of* Ahab *and* Jezebel; *and that his whole Race ſhould be rooted out for this flagicious Cruelty, in taking away the Life of an innocent Man, by Calumny and Subordination.*

Theſe Words of the Prophet brought *Ahab* to the Senſe of a true and ſincere Repentance. He mortified himſelf in Sackcloth and faſting, going bare-foot, and giving Manifeſtation of a hearty Sorrow for his Sins; ſo that God ſent the Prophet once again to him with another Meſſage, to acquaint him, that in regard to his Penitence and Humiliation, the Judgment denounced ſhould not be executed in his Days, but ſhould come to paſs in the Days of his Son.

900 BC?

CHAP. VI.

The Siege of Samaria *by* Ben-hadad. *Slaughter of the* Syrians. Ahab *diſmiſſeth* Ben-hadad. *Is reproved by a Prophet. Seduced by falſe Prophets, and ſlain. Prediction concerning the Dogs licking up his Blood fulfilled. Different Characters and Reigns of* Jehoſhaphat *and* Ahaziah.

I Kings XX

DURING theſe Tranſactions, relating to King *Ahab*, *Ben-hadad* King of *Syria* and *Damaſcus*, levied a powerful Army out of his whole Kingdom; and being joined by two and thirty confederate Kings, beyond the *Euphrates*, marched with this mighty Armament againſt *Ahab*, who did not think it reaſonable, upon ſo vaſt a Diſparity in Number, to venture a Battle in the Field; but choſe rather to draw his military Men out of the open Country into ſtrong Holds and fortified Towns, and to keep themſelves upon the defenſive.

He made Choice of *Samaria* for his Capital, which he reſolved to make good, eſpecially as the Place was well fortified by Nature and Art.

The *Syrian* brought his Army before it, and began in Form to make his Attack, ſending a Herald to *Ahab* at the ſame Time, for Licence to diſpatch Ambaſſadors to him, with Inſtructions to propoſe what he ſhould demand.

This was granted, and the Ambaſſadors ſent and received, having a Commiſſion, as they ſaid, to tell him, that his Treaſure, his Wives, and his Children, were at *Ben-hadad*'s Mercy; and that if he would acknowledge as much, and permit the other to take what he thought fit out of them, he would inſtantly quit the Siege, and withdraw his Army.

Ahab ſent the Ambaſſadors back, with this Anſwer, That he himſelf, and all he had, was at their Maſter's Service.

The *Syrian*, after this Demand and Return, ſent yet another Embaſſy, which was, that upon ſending his Officers and Servants to him next Morning, they ſhould have free Liberty to ſearch all his own Lodgings, with the Houſes and Apartments of all his Relations and Domeſticks, and to take away with them whatever they ſhould deem worthy of their Acceptance; and as for the Remainder, *Ahab* might keep to himſelf.

This Meſſage was by no Means diſagreeable to *Ahab*, as it afforded him a very plauſible Pretence for calling a Council, in order to debate on Meaſures neceſſary to be purſued.

Accordingly, when the Aſſembly was convened, he thus addreſſed them, *I have had two Propoſals ſent me from* Ben-hadad; *the former for an Acknowledgment that myſelf, my Wives, and Children, are all at his Mercy; and upon the Terms of ſuch a Confeſſion, he was to raiſe the Siege.*

Now all this I yielded to, as I would part with any thing of my own Intereſt for the Sake of the Publick Peace, and the common Good of my People; but they are now come to inſiſt upon a general Surrender, out of a meer

meer captious Humour, to pick a Quarrel with us.

They began at first with my own particular Concerns, out of an Opinion that Self-partiality would cause me to hesitate on that Point. But I am now to deliver up my Country and my People, which they know I will never do. Therefore there must be a War.

I am ready and resolved to act solely according to your Counsel and Approbation.

The Council vehemently exclaimed against the Insolence of this Barbarian, and gave their Voices unanimously for a War; so that the Ambassadors were sent away with this Answer, *That the King would yet agree to their first Demands; but that for the Security and Honour of the Citizens, he would never consent to the latter.*

Ben-hadad was so enraged at this Answer, that he sent a third Embassy which was much more peremptory and menacing than the former; *Tell the King, That he values himself upon the Strength and Security of his Walls; but before he is aware, I will cast up Works that shall surmount them; and that will be but every Soldier a Handful of Earth to do this Business*; intimating thereby the incredible Number of his People.

To this *Ahab* replied, *That Men of Honour were to dispute with their Swords, not with their Tongues.*

Ben-hadad happened to be at Supper, with his two and thirty confederate Kings, upon the Ambassador's Arrival with this Answer; and he gave Orders the same Moment for the Siege, and for prosecuting every Measure that might conduce to the taking of the Town.

Ahab, in the mean Time, and his Party, were dispirited and hopeless, till a certain Prophet came to him, and dispersed his Fears with an Assurance from God, that he should prevail against that mighty Army. *Ahab* was desirous to know by what Hands this Victory should be obtained. The Prophet on Enquiry answered, *by the Sons of the Nobility, and yourself at the Head of them, to conduct them, and give your Orders.* So the King then called them together to the Number of two Hundred and Thirty-two; and *Ahab* having Information that the *Syrian* was in the Height of his Cups and Luxury, the Gates were thrown open of a sudden, and these young Heroes made a Sally. The Information of this was no sooner brought to *Ben-hadad* than he forthwith sent out a Party toward them with Orders, that whether they came to fight or to treat, they should bring them bound to him.

Ahab in the mean Time had the rest of his Army in readiness within the Walls, to issue out upon Occasion. These great Officers Sons first engaged with the Guards, killed a great many of them, and pursued the rest up to their Tents. When the King of *Israel* found that they succeeded thus far so well, he issued out with the Remainder of the Army, and furiously charged the *Syrians*; took them at unawares, and routed them without any Difficulty, having only drunken Men unarmed;

so

ſo that they were forced to flee for their Lives, *Ben-hadad* himſelf eſcaping with Difficulty, by the Swiftneſs of his Horſe.

They purſued them a great Way, ſlaying all whom they overtook; and then with a rich Booty of Gold, Silver, and Equipages that they took in the Tents, and the very Chariots and Horſes of *Ben-hadad*, they marched back again to the City.

The Prophet however adviſed the King, after all this, to have an Army in readineſs to take the Field next Spring; for *Ben-hadad* would give occaſion for it. So *Ahab* prepared vigorouſly for it on the one Hand, and *Ben-hadad* called his Friends together on the other, with the Remainder of his broken Army, to adviſe, how to proceed.

Ben-hadad's Friends were againſt his fighting any more in the Mountains; for the *Iſraelite*'s God, ſaid they, was the God of the Mountains; but if they fought upon the Plains, the *Iſraelites* would have been worſted. They alſo adviſed the Diſcharge of the confederate Princes from any further perſonal Service and Attendance; only detaining their Troops to ſtay, and be ſupplied by them with good Officers. That in the Mean Time, their Commanders might be levying Recruits of Horſe and Foot to fill up their broken Companies. The King was well pleaſed with this Advice, and applied himſelf to put it into Execution.

In the Beginning of the Spring, he marched his Army againſt the *Iſraelites*, and pitched his Camp in a large Plain, not far from the City of *Aphek*. *Ahab* in the mean Time, with his Troops advanced, and drew up juſt overagainſt him, though by many Thouſands inferior to the Number of the *Syrians*.

While the Armies were drawn up oppoſite each other, the Prophet came to the *Iſraelites*, with an Aſſurance from God, that they ſhould be victorious, and that their Enemies ſhould find the God of the Mountains to be the God of the Vallies alſo.

The Armies continued for ſix Days in the ſame Station, without moving; and upon the ſeventh Day they advanced on both Sides in a Line, and joined Battle.

It was maintained with great Obſtinacy at the firſt Onſet, but when the *Syrians* found that they were not able to ſtand the Shock any longer, they turned their Back, and betook themſelves to Flight, with the *Iſraelites* cloſe at their Heels.

Betwixt thoſe that were ſlain upon the Purſuit, and thoſe that periſhed by Miſadventure, in the Confuſion of their Flight, by their own Chariots and Men, ſome torn to Pieces, others trampled to Death; the overthrow was very great.

Thoſe that got into *Aphek*, the only Place they had to fly to, were not many, conſidering ſo mighty a Body of Men; and of them about ſeven and twenty thouſand were buried under the Ruins of the Walls, beſides a hundred thouſand that were ſlain in the Battle.

Ben-hadad, with ſome of his truſty Officers

Officers and Servants, got into a Cave, and hid himſelf, where ſome of thoſe about him extolled the natural Humanity and Good-nature of the *Iſraelites*, adviſed their Maſter to caſt himſelf at *Ahab*'s Feet for Mercy, confident that, upon ſuch an Application and Submiſſion, it would not be refuſed him.

The King conſented to try the Experiment; and thereupon a certain Number of his Train were immediately dreſſed up in the Habit of Supplicants and Captives, cloathed in Sackcloth, with Halters about their Necks, according to the Cuſtom of the Country in ſuch Caſes, and ſent to *Ahab*, with a Commiſſion to tell him, *Ben-hadad* was the Priſoner, and would ever own himſelf ſo to be; and that they came in his Name, only to implore his Grace toward him for the ſaving of his Life.

Ahab replied, *I am glad he is ſafe; and you may aſſure him, that he ſhall be as welcome to me as if he was my own Brother.*

The Meſſengers, upon the Solemnity of a ſacred Oath, that no Violence ſhould be offered to his Perſon, went away to their Maſter, and brought him out to the King of *Iſrael*, who was at that Time in his Chariot. As ſoon as the Priſoner had made his Obeiſance, *Ahab* bowed himſelf to receive him, taking him up to him with his Right-hand, and kiſſing him, giving him his Faith, and alſo his Honour, for his abſolute Security and Freedom.

Ben-hadad, on the other Side, returned large Acknowledgments, with repeated Proteſtations, that this Generoſity and Goodneſs ſhould never be forgotten; and, in the mean Time, he would reſtore again to the *Iſraelites* all the Cities and Lands that had been taken from them, and that *Ahab* ſhould be as free at *Damaſcus*, as ever the other's Father had been at *Samaria*.

Upon this they proceeded to the ſigning and ſealing of a League, and the reciprocal Interchange of Oaths, for the Performance of Covenants; and *Ben-hadad* was diſmiſſed, not without magnificent Preſents.

After this Victory over the *Syrians*, a certain Prophet, whoſe Name was *Michaiah*, came to an *Iſraelite*, and bad him ſtrike him over the Head; telling him withal, that it was God's Will to have it ſo; but the Man refuſing to do it, the Prophet told him, he ſhould pay dear for his Diſobedience; for he ſhould be devoured by a Lion.

This accordingly happened; and the Prophet, with the ſame Words, went afterwards to another, who immediately gave him a Blow on the Top of his Head, that drew Blood of him. Upon this, he bound up his Head, and went to the King with this Story, that he was a Soldier, and a certain Officer had delivered him a Priſoner to keep, who had made his Eſcape, and he himſelf was now forced to fly for it, for fear the Officer that committed him to his Cuſtody ſhould put him to Extremities for letting him go.

Well, ſays *Ahab*, and he would ſerve you but right neither. Upon which

which Words, the Prophet unbound his Head, to give *Ahab* to understand, that he that told him this Story was *Michaiah*.

He made uſe of this artful Circumlocution to faſten the deeper Impreſſion on him; informing him in the End, that God would call him to a ſevere Account, for permitting ſo impious and blaſphemous a Wretch as *Benhadad* to go, when he had him in his Power; and aſſuring him, that the Time would come, when this very Man, that he had now ſpared, ſhould be the Death of himſelf, and the Deſtruction of his Army. *Ahab* was ſo incenſed at this Prophet's faithful Diſcharge of his Commiſſion from the Lord, that he ordered him to be impriſoned. However, the Prediction was attended with terrible Apprehenſions, and cauſed him to return Home in a State of Deſpondency.

During their Tranſactions relative to that King of *Iſrael*, *Jehoſaphat*, King of *Jeruſalem*, a Prince of a very different Turn of Mind from that of the former, had not only fortified with Garriſons all the Places under his Dominions, but likewiſe thoſe in the Land of *Ephraim*, that his Grandfather *Abijah* had taken from *Jeroboam*, the King of the ten Tribes. The King never failed of God's Bleſſing and Protection in any of his Undertakings; for he was a juſt and pious Man, and not a Day paſſed in which he neglected his Duty to God or his People. The Integrity of his Life and Manners acquired a high Reputation among all the Neighbouring Kings, as appeared by the Frequency and Elegance of their Preſents, which not a little contributed to the advancing of his Fortune, as well as his Fame.

In the third Year of his Reign he called together the Elders and the Prieſts that were under his Juriſdiction, and gave them Orders to have Commiſſioners ſent from Town to Town, throughout the Kingdom, to ſuperintend the Worſhip of God, and to ſee that *Moſes*'s Laws might be duly obſerved. This Care for the Preſervation of their Religion was ſo great a Satisfaction to all his Subjects, that there appeared a laudable Emulation to excel in the promoting of ſo pious a Deſign.

The neighbouring Princes held him in ſuch Reverence, that they lived in a fair Underſtanding one with another, and in an inviolate Peace. The *Philiſtines* paid their ordinary Tribute with Punctuality, and the *Arabians* their Annuity of ſix Hundred and thirty Lambs, and the like Number of Kids. *Jehoſaphat* alſo fortified his great Towns, and kept in conſtant Pay a well-diſciplined Army, to be in Readineſs on every Occaſion.

Of the Tribe of *Judah* there were three hundred Thouſand Shield-bearers, under the Command of *Adnah*; two hundred Thouſand under *Jehonanan*, and of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, two hundred Thouſand Archers, under the ſame Officers.

There was alſo another Captain, whoſe Name was *Jehozabad*, that commanded a hundred and eighty Thouſand Men, armed with Bucklers, be-

beſide the Soldiers that were diſperſed in Towns and Garriſons.

He married his Son *Jehoram* to the Daughter of *Ahab*, King of the ten Tribes; and when he had Occaſion to go to *Samaria*, he was moſt magnificently entertained by *Ahab*, he and all his Army, with Corn, Wine, Fleſh, and other Proviſions.

Upon *Ahab*'s Entreaty, he joined with him in a War upon the King of *Syria*, for the Recovery of *Ramoth-Gilead*, which had been taken, and was detained from him by that Prince. *Jehoſaphat* having an Army of his own, not inferior to the other, promiſed him his Aſſiſtance, and ſent for his Troops from *Jeruſalem* to *Samaria*, where both the Kings went out of the Town, and each ſitting upon his Throne, took a Review of their Forces, and paid the Army.

Jehoſaphat, upon this Occaſion, was of Opinion, if any of the Prophets were at hand, to adviſe with them concerning this Expedition againſt the *Syrians*, whether or no it were adviſable to undertake a War at this Time; for there had been three Years Peace betwixt thoſe two Kings, ſince the *Syrian* was taken Priſoner, and ſet at Liberty.

In Conſequence, with the Counſel of *Jehoſaphat*, *Ahab* called his Prophets together about him, to the Number of about four Hundred, and ordered them to enquire, whether or no they ſhould be victorious in this War againſt *Ben-hadad*, and carry the City, which was the main Point in Diſpute.

The Prophets were unanimous for the War; the *Syrian* they declared ſhould be overcome, and made Priſoner as before. *Jehoſaphat* gave no Credit to their Words, but ſuſpecting them to be falſe Prophets, aſked *Ahab* what other Prophets there were, that he might have Recourſe to? He informed him, that there was another indeed, one *Michaiah*, the Son of *Emla*, but he hated the Man; for he had propheſied ill Succeſs to his Affairs, and given out that he was to loſe his Life in this Action againſt the King of *Syria*, ſo that he had now impriſoned him on that Account.

But *Jehoſaphat* inſiſting that he ſhould be conſulted, an Eunuch then in waiting was diſpatched to fetch him. This Meſſenger told *Michaiah* as they were upon the Way together, what the reſt of the Prophets ſaid, and how they all agreed, that *Ahab* ſhould be victorious.

Michaiah honeſtly replied, *I muſt not prevaricate with him who made me; but by the Grace of God, what Meſſage ſoever he ſhall think fit to put in my Mouth, ſhall be moſt faithfully reported to the King.*

Upon this Prophet's Arrival, *Ahab* adjured him to ſpeak the very Truth, without Addition or Diminution. Upon which the Prophet thus declared, *I ſaw all* Iſrael *ſcattered and flying, and the* Syrians *purſuing them, as Sheep that had no Shepherd; by which Repreſentation God hath given to underſtand, that all the reſt of the People ſhall return, and* Ahab *alone ſhall fall in the Battle.*

The King upon theſe Words, turning

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ing to *Jehoſaphat*, enquired, if he was not convinced that this Man was his Enemy?

This occaſioned the Prophet to add farther, *The Words that I deliver are according to the expreſs Direction and Command of God; but you ſuffer yourſelf to be flattered by your falſe Prophets into War, upon the Hope of Victory, when you yourſelf are to fall in it.* This Firmneſs and Reſolution of the Prophet gave the King much Concern.

One of the falſe Prophets, whoſe Name was *Zedekiah*, ſtood forth upon this Occaſion, and in Contempt of *Michaiah*, adviſed the King not to give any Heed to what that Babler ſaid, as there was not a Word of Truth in it; and there needed no other Proof of his being an Impoſtor, than the Prediction of *Elijah*, who undoubtedly ſaw further into Things to come than he did; for he had foretold, *That in the Place where Dogs licked the Blood of* Naboth, *(who was ſtoned to Death by his Command) in the Field of* Naboth, *Dogs ſhould lick the King's Blood alſo.*

Now this is a moſt palpable Falſity, in Contradiction to the Prediction of a Prophet of much greater Authority than himſelf; for he will have it, that within the Compaſs of three Days, the King is to fall in the Battle; but it ſhall be quickly ſeen, by what Spirit this Man ſpeaks. I will ſtrike him upon the Ear, and let my Hand wither in doing it, as Jeroboam's *did upon lifting up his Hand againſt* Jadon, *when he would have had the Prophet taken into Cuſtody, if what he delivers to you be from Heaven. I take it for granted, that you have heard of the Circumſtance.*

Upon uttering theſe Words he ſtruck the Prophet; and *Ahab* finding no Judgment immediately enſued, was hardened in his Reſolution upon this War, by a Fatality, that diſpoſed him to give more Credit to falſe Prophets that to true ones, and produced Cauſes that might be followed with ſuitable Events.

Zedekiah then made him Horns of Iron, and declared, that under the Figure of theſe Horns, as ſignified by God, the puſhing, and the breaking of all *Syria*.

Michaiah, on the other hand, telling the falſe Prophet, that in a very ſhort Time he ſhould be called to an Account for the Vanity and Falſity of his Pretenſions, and be driven from one Hiding-Place to another, to ſave himſelf.

Ahab was ſo exaſperated, that he appointed *Amon*, the Governor of the City, to take him into cloſe Cuſtody, and feed him with only Bread and Water, till he ſhould return.

The dire Event, foretold by the faithful *Michaiah* now approached, the two Kings advanced with their Troops toward *Ramoth*, and the King of *Syria* hearing of it, went out to meet them.

It was agreed upon betwixt them, That *Ahab* ſhould that Day diſguiſe himſelf in a private Habit, and the King of *Jeruſalem* appear in his Royal Robes, the better to evade the Fate predicted by the Prophet. But the awful Stroke reached the King, not-

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withſtanding he thought to evade it, by depriving himſelf of all his Enſigns of Royalty for *Ben-hadad* gave a ſtrict Charge to his Officers and Commanders to fight, neither with ſmall nor great, but with the King of *Iſrael*.

The *Syrians* upon the firſt Puſh, ſeeing *Jehoſaphat* at the Head of the Army, immediately preſſed upon him, taking him for *Ahab*, but when they found their Error, went off and left him.

They kept the Field from Morning till Night, the one flying, and the other purſuing, but not one Drop of Blood was ſpilt; the *Syrians* only hunting after *Ahab*, and ſtill not finding him; but in the End, one of *Ben-hadad*'s Domeſticks, drew an Arrow at a Venture, that ſtruck the King thro' the Joints of his Armour to his very Lungs.

Ahab was willing to keep it private, for Fear of diſcouraging his Men; he therefore deſired his Charioteer to carry him a little Diſtance from the Army: for ſaid he, I am mortally wounded. He, however, kept his Chariot till about Sun-ſet, though in great Pain and Torment, and then between his Agony and Weakneſs, with the Loſs of Blood, he expired.

The Night coming on, the *Syrians* withdrew to their Tents; and as ſoon as they were informed by a Herald of *Ahab*'s Death, the Camp broke up, and every Man departed to his own Habitation.

The King's Body was carried to *Samaria*, and there interred; and upon waſhing the Blood off the Chariot in a Fountain near at hand, the Prediction of *Elijah* was verified; for the Dogs licked up the Blood; and the Place was afterwards made Uſe of for common Women to bathe in.

He died at *Ramoth*, according to the Prophecy of *Micaiah*; ſo to the great Honour and Authority of Revelation, the Preſages of both the Prophets was made good, to the eternal Shame and Confuſion of time-ſerving Impoſtors, that adapt all their Predictions to their Intereſt; and inſtead of telling us from God what we are to believe and do, give us effectually to underſtand that we are not to believe or do. *

Thus died *Ahab*, King of *Iſrael*, by Means of a divine Appointment, in Conſequence of his Deviation from ſtrict Obedience to the Divine Command; finding too late the Folly and Weakneſs of relying upon falſe and flattering Prophets, in Oppoſition to the Declaration of thoſe commiſſion'd from above. and *Ahaziah* his Son ſucceeded him in the Government of *Iſrael*.

Upon *Jehoſaphat*'s returning to *Jeruſalem*, after his joining with *Ahab* againſt *Ben-hadad*, the Prophet

* Upon this Occaſion I cannot but reflect upon the inſuperable Neceſſity of the Accompliſhment of the divine Will, which is not in this World to be avoided, even though it ſhould be foreknown. But we ſuffer ourſelves to be deluded with vain Hopes, till we are irrecoverably overwhelmed in the Snare.

Jehu met him, and rebuked him, for his eſpouſing the Quarrel of ſo impious and flagitious a Wretch as *Ahab*.

He told him how highly he had offended God by making that Alliance: but yet that he was graciouſly pleaſed, as his Heart was upright before him, to paſs over what he had done amiſs, and to deliver him out of the Hands of his Enemies.

Upon this Admonition, the King turned himſelf to God by Prayers and Sacrifices, appointed a general Viſitation through all his Dominions, with Orders for inſtructing the People in the Laws of *Moſes*, and in the Religion of their Forefathers.

He alſo appointed Magiſtrates in all Cities, and great Towns, giving them charge to adminiſter Juſtice to all Men indifferently, to the Poor as well as the Rich, without any Reſpect to Profit, Favour or Affection; and in fine, to diſcharge their Duties as in the Sight of all-ſeeing God that knew the very Thoughts of their Hearts.

Having thus ſettled the Adminiſtration of Affairs, both Civil and Religious, in the ſeveral Cities of the two Tribes, he returned to *Jeruſalem*, where he conſtituted Judges from amongſt the moſt conſiderable of the Prieſts and Levites, enjoyning them to do Juſtice impartially; or if there ſhould ariſe any Controverſies of more Weight than ordinary, in any of their neighbouring Cities, that ſhould be brought to them for Judgment, they ſhould not paſs Sentence without all poſſible Deliberation; for it would be moſt ſcandalous and diſhonorable to neglect the ſtricteſt Rules of Juſtice, in a City where God had eſtabliſhed his Temple, and the King his Palace.

He choſe the chief Magiſtrates out of the Number of his own Friends; as *Amariah* the Prieſt, and *Zebadiah* of the Houſe of *Judah*.

At this Time, the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* made War upon *Jehoſaphat*, aſſiſted with a mighty Army of auxiliary *Arabians*, and encamped at *Engedi*, a City near the Lake of *Aſphaltites*, about three hundered Furlongs from *Jeruſalem*, and famous for Balſam and Palm-trees.

When *Jehoſaphat* underſtood that they had paſſed the Lake, and made Inroads into his Country, was much alarmed, and having immediately called an Aſſembly of State, and ſtanding before the Temple, betook himſelf to Prayers, for God's Bleſſing upon his Arms againſt ſo powerful an Enemy, which was according to the Form and Practice of his Forefathers, upon the firſt Inſtruction of that holy Place; who whenever they found themſelves in Danger of being over-run by a foreign Enemy, cauſed all the People to meet in full Congregation, to implore God's Aſſiſtance towards the Repelling of that Violence, and for the Maintenance of that Inheritance which the Lord, in his infinite Bounty, had beſtowed upon them, that their Enemies ſought to take away by Force.

Jehoſaphat mingled his Prayers with Tears, and the joint Supplications

inſtitution

tions of the whole Multitude, with their Wives and Children accompanied them.

As they were in the Fervour of their Devotion, there ſtarted up a certain Prophet in the midſt of them, whoſe Name was *(a) Jahaziel*, declaring to the People, that God had heard their Prayers, and would fight their Battle, in Favour of the Religion they profeſſed; warning them, upon this, to be in Readineſs next Day to march towards their Enemies, whom they ſhould find encamped betwixt *Jeruſalem* and *Engedi*, at a certain Aſcent, known by the Name of *Ziz*, (which in *Hebrew* ſignifies an Eminence); informing them farther, that they ſhould not need ſtrike a Stroke, but only ſtand looking on them, as unconcerned Spectators of an Action wherein God would fight for them.

After this Declaration, both the King and People, fell proſtrate upon their Faces, gave Thanks, and worſhipped. The Levites in the mean while accompanying their Hymns with Muſical Inſtruments.

The King, early next Morning, went into the Deſart, under the City of *Tekoa*, where he admoniſhed the Multitude to put their Truſt in God, according to the Prediction of the Prophet, and that there was no Need of ranging themſelves in a Form of Battle, only to ſet the Prieſts with their Trumpets in the firſt Line, and the Levites with their Singers, and ſo move chearfully forward, with Muſick and Thankſgiving, as upon a Day of Victory, or Deliverance from a common Enemy.

They were all highly ſatisfied with the King's Advice, and ſoon put it in Execution; for God ſtruck the *Ammonites* and their Allies with ſuch a Panic and Conſternation, that falling upon one another, that of many Thouſands of Soldiers, there was not one Man left alive.

When *Jehoſaphat* came to take a View of the Valley where the Enemy was encamped, he found it covered with dead Bodies. Never was Victory gained more entire, or with ſuch Eaſe, inſomuch, that *Jehoſaphat*, in a Tranſport of Joy, for ſo unexpected a Bleſſing, gave his Soldiers the Pillage of the Camp, and the Spoil of the Dead, which was ſo prodigious, that they were full three Days in carrying off their Booty.

On the fourth Day, all the People gathered together, in a deep craggy Valley of *Berachah*, where they praiſed and bleſſed God for all the Works of his Power and Mercy.

From hence it was that the Valley took its Name *Barachah*, ſignifying the Valley of Bleſſings.

The King led his Army from thence to *Jeruſalem*, where he paſſed ſeveral Days in Sacrifice and Feaſting.

(a) Jahaziel. This Perſon ſeems to have been immediately inſpired by God on this Occaſion, (for we do not read of him as a Prophet either before or after) to comfort the People with an Aſſurance of their Deliverance: God himſelf hereby teſtifying how acceptable their pious King's devout Addreſs had been to him.

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The Report of this miraculous Victory filled all foreign Princes and Nations, wherever it came, with ſuch a Reverence for the Sanctity and Piety of *Jehoſaphat*, that they looked upon him as a Perſon for whom God had a particular Kindneſs, and retained the ſame Opinion of him to the End of his Days.

Nothing in the Hiſtory of *Jehoſaphat* can more excite the Wonder of the pious Reader, than that a Prince ſo eminent for ſtrict Obedience to the divine Law, and the peculiar Manifeſtations of the divine Favour, as that this King ſhould ſtill be attached to the Family and Intereſt of *Ahab*'s Race, ſo far as to join with his Son *Ahaziah*, both in War and Traffic; for we find that they were jointly concerned in ſetting out Ships for the Traffic of *Pontus* and *Trace*.

But the Deſign miſcarried to their great Expence and Detriment; for the Veſſels were not adapted to thoſe Seas; ſo that whether through ill Conduct, or foul Weather, they were all caſt away, and the Project proved abortive, and was never after reſumed.

Abaziah, King of *Iſrael*, had his Royal Palace at *Samaria*. He was wicked and prophane, and altogether adhered to the Principles of his Father and Mother, and ſeemed to have had a certain Emulation to out-ſin *Jeroboam* himſelf, the capital Seducer of *Iſrael*.

In the ſecond Year of his Reign, the King of the *Moabites* revolted, and abſolutely refuſed to be any longer ſubject to the Tribute he had formerly paid to his Father.

Ahaziah being in Danger of his Life, from a Fall from off the Battlements into the Court-yard of his Palace, ſent to enquire of the Idol God of *Ekron* concerning the Event of the Malady conſequent on the Fall.

Upon this Occaſion the God of *Iſrael* commanded the Prophet *Elijah* to go immediately, meet the Meſſengers, and aſk them, Whether the *Iſraelites* had not a God of their own? And if ſo, remind them that there was no Need of conſulting a ſtrange God in the Caſe; and therefore they had beſt go back to the King, and tell him that he ſhould not recover.

The Meſſengers immediately took their Errand from *Elijah*, and haſted with it to the King, who was ſurprized at their haſty Return. They told him of a Man they met, who bad them go no farther, and withal charging them to tell their King in the Name of the God of the *Iſraelites*, that his Illneſs was mortal.

The King was very earneſt with them to deſcribe the Man; ſo they told him, he was a hairy Man, with a leathern Girdle about him. By this Deſcription the King preſently concluded this Perſon to be *Elijah*, and diſpatched an Officer with fifty Soldiers to take him into Cuſtody.

The Commander finding him upon the Top of a Mountain, called him down to go with him to the King, and informing him, that if he refuſed, he muſt uſe compulſive Meaſures.

Elijah told him, that to ſhew him the Difference between a true Prophet and a falſe one, he would now

now convince him by a Prodigy, that he was no Impoſtor.

II Kings I. 12

If I am a Man of God, ſays he, *let Fire come down from Heaven, and devour thee, and thy fifty.*

The Prophet had no ſooner put the Authenticity of his Predictions to this Teſt, than a Fire deſcended, and conſumed them all. The Tidings of this dreadful Judgment no ſooner reached the King's Ear, than enraged he ſent another Officer, with the ſame Number of Men, and upon the ſame Errand. The Captain ſaid the ſame Things, uſed the ſame Menaces, and they were all deſtroyed after the ſame Manner. After this the King ſent a third Officer with his Party.

This Meſſenger ſeeing a Perſon, who ſeemed to have maintained a due Reſpect for the Prophet of the Lord, addreſſed him in the following humble Manner. *I need not tell you, that I am under Command; that I come upon this Errand unwillingly, as they did likewiſe who came before me; wherefore I beſeech you be pleaſed out of Pity to me, and my Soldiers about me, to come down willingly, and follow us to the King.*

Elijah was ſo much moved with the Modeſty and Humility of this Officer, that he went down and followed him. When they had brought him into the King's Preſence, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he freely addreſſed the King in theſe Words, *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſince you have an Opinion of me that I am no God, nor able to foretel what will be the Iſſue of your Diſtemper; and that you have rather choſen to ſend to the God of the People of* Ekron *for your Satisfaction, know for certain that it will be your Death.*

In ſome ſhort Time this Prophecy was fulfilled; and *Ahaziah* dying without Iſſue, *Jeboram* his Brother ſucceeded to the Scepter of *Iſrael*; he was equal to *Ahab* in a vicious and irreligious Courſe of Life; for he delivered himſelf up wholly to ſtrange Gods, to the Scandal and Diſhonour of the Religion of his Forefathers, though in other Reſpects he had Genius and Capacity happily adapted to conduct the important Buſineſs of State.

About the Cloſe of the Reign of this Prince, *Elijah*, that faithful Servant and eminent Prophet of the God of *Iſrael*, was tranſlated from the lower Earth to the Regions of Bliſs and Glory.

II Kings II 11

Whilſt theſe pious Men were diſcourſing, there appeared a Chariot of Fire, and Horſes, which ſeparated them, and in a ſhort Time *Elijah* was hurled in a Whirlwind from the Sight of *Eliſha* into Heaven. *

862 B.C.

This wonderful Exertion of Almighty Power was diſplayed in the Preſervance of *Eliſha*, in order to ſtrengthen his Reliance on that God who had enabled him to perform divine Miracles in Confirmation of the Truth of his Prophetic Miſſion.

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* The Enemies of Revelation have not failed to throw their impious Scoffs on this

Jehoram now elevated to the Throne of his Father *Ahaziah*, determined to make war upon *Meſha* King of the *Moabites*, for refuſing to pay the yearly Tribute of two hundred thouſand unſhorn Sheep, upon the Account of what was formerly paid to his Father *Ahab*; wherefore he began with levying an Army at Home, and after that ſolicited the Aſſiſtance of *Jehoſaphat* (upon the Account of his having maintained an Alliance with his Father) to join him, *Jehoſaphat* not only promiſed for himſelf, but undertook likewiſe to engage the King of *Edom*, having ſome Tie upon him, in the Party.

When *Jehoram* came to underſtand how well he was to be ſupported, he went forthwith to *Jeruſalem*, where he was ſplendidly received and entertained by the King. Being there in Council, the Method of the Expedition was taken into Debate, and it was unanimouſly agreed for the Army to ſteer their Courſe through the Deſart of *Edom*, where the Enemy would be leaſt aware of the Deſign. The Kings of *Jeruſalem*, *Iſrael*, and *Edom*, therefore put themſelves upon their March, according to the Reſolution of the Council; and when they had wandered up and down for the Space of ſeven Days, they were greatly diſtreſſed for want of Water, for Man and Beaſt, inſomuch that both their Men and Cattle were upon the Point of periſhing.

Jehoram thus impiouſly and preſumptuouſly expoſtulated with God upon that awful Occaſion, *What have theſe three Kings done, to be delivered up Captives to the King of the* Moabites, *without the Hazard of a Battle?*

Jehoſaphat, on the other Hand, as became a pious Man, and according to his general Practice, endeavoured to appeaſe the Vehemence of *Jehoram*, adviſing him to enquire, if there were a Prophet in the Army to aſk Counſel of God what was to be done under their preſent Circumſtances. A Servant within hearing, told them that he had ſeen *Eliſha* the Son of *Shaphat* there, the Diſciple of *Elijah*; and upon this Information, the three Kings, at the Perſuaſion of *Jehoſhaphat*, went and found him out.

When they came to his Tent, which was at a little Diſtance from the Camp, they aſked him what would become of the Army for want of Water; but *Jehoram* being more importunate than the reſt, the Prophet addreſſing him, ſaid, *You ſhould have gone to your Father's and Mother's Prophets for Satisfaction, without troubling other People; they would have reſolved you no Doubt.*

Paſt of ſacred Writ, as well as that which ſpeaks of the Tranſlation of Enoch; becauſe the preciſe Manner of it, is not recounted.

But ſuch would do well to remember, that many of the Operations of Omnipotence are beyond the Comprehenſion of finite Beings, and that to ſcan the Practicability of Things, with reſpect to that divine Attribute, by human Reaſon, is as abſurd, as it is impious.

Jehoram

Jehoram importuned him ſtill, intreating and begging for an Anſwer, if it were but for the ſaving of ſo many Mens Lives that were ready to periſh. *Eliſha* ſwore ſolemnly to *Jehoram*, that if it were not for the Sake of *Jehoſaphat*, who was a good and a pious Man, he ſhould have had no Anſwer from him.

Upon this he ordered a Muſician to be called, and as he was ſinging, the Spirit of God came upon the Prophet, who ſpoke to the Kings in this Manner, to make ſeveral Ditches in the Channels of the Torrent. *You ſhall ſee them all flowing with Water, without either Wind or Rain; Water ſufficient for yourſelves and your Cattle, to all Manner of Purpoſes. Beſide that, henceforward you ſhall never feel any more Drought; nor is this all; for God will bleſs you yet further, for by his Grace and Help you ſhall overcome your Enemies, and ſcatter them, and ruin their Plantations; lay their Country Waſte, and dam up their Rivers and their Fountains.*

The Day after the Prophet had thus predicted, there came down from *Edom* three Days Journey from this Place, an impetuous Torrent upon a mighty Fall of Rain, ſo that there was no longer any Want of Drink, either for Man or Beaſt.

When the King of *Moab* underſtood that theſe three Kings were advancing againſt him by the Way of the Wilderneſs, he muſtered all his Forces to meet them upon the Borders, leſt they might find an Opportunity of falling on him by Surprize. The two Armies were by this Time not far from the Land of *Moab*, when the riſing Sun ſtriking upon the Torrent, made the Water look ſo red, that the *Moabites* took it for Blood, vainly imagining, that the three Kings had fallen upon one another in a Rage for want of Water, and that this Torrent was a Stream of their Blood.

In this Confidence they went to their King only for Permiſſion to rifle the Enemy's Camp, taking it for granted, that it was abandoned. Upon their Application, they obtained Leave to break in upon the Enemy's Baggage, and confident of making a large Booty advanced without Order, and in great Haſte towards the Camp; but they ſoon reaped the Fruits of their Raſhneſs and vain Boaſting; for being charged on all Hands in the Attempt, Part of them were ſlain, and the Reſt ſo ſcattered, that with much Difficulty they eſcaped with their Lives.

The Kings, in the mean Time, made an Incurſion into the Land of the *Moabites*, deſtroyed their Towns and Cities, drove away all their Cattle, and covered all the Turf with the Sand and Gravel of the Torrent; cut down the beſt of their Woods and Trees, dam'd up the Springs and Fountains, and levelled their Walls to the Ground; nay, the King himſelf was forced to take Sanctuary in a Town, where he was afterwards beſieged; and in ſuch Danger of loſing it by an Aſſault, that he attempted a Sally

Sally with ſeven hundred Horſe upon the Enemy's weakeſt Quarter, to break through their Body; but failing in his Attempt, he was forced into the Town again, where he entered upon the moſt horrid and barbarous Action that the uttermoſt Diſtreſs or Deſpair could bring a Perſon to perpetrate.

He took his *(b)* eldeſt Son, the next Heir to the Government, and ſacrificed him to God upon the Walls, in the View of the Enemy's Army. The Kings reflecting upon the Force of an abandoned Deſperation, together with the Viciſſitude of human Affairs, and conſidering if it were their own Caſe, were ſoftened to ſuch a Degree of Compaſſion, that they broke up the Siege upon it, and departed.

Jehoſaphat after this Expedition reigned in Peace, but did not long enjoy his Crown; for he died at *Jeruſalem* in the ſixtieth Year of his Age, and in the twenty-fifth of his Reign; and had in that City a moſt magnificent Burial, as became the Imitator of *David*, the renowned Monarch of that State.

(b) Eldeſt Son. We are aſſured, not only from Scripture, but from the Teſtimony of ſeveral Heathen Writers, that in Caſes of great Extremity, it was Cuſtomary to ſacrifice to their Gods, whatever was dear to them.

Cæſar, in his Commentaries, tells us, that when the Gauls were afflicted with any grievous Diſeaſes, or apprehenſive of great Danger, they either offered Men for Sacrifices, or vowed that they would offer them, becauſe, ſays he, "they imagined their Gods could never be appeaſed, unleſs one man's Life was given for another's." *Grotius* is of Opinion, that this King of *Moab*, in Imitation of *Abraham*, ſacrificed his Wrath, and to move the Compaſſion of the Kings that were beſieging him: but the moſt probable Opinion is, that he offered this coſtly Sacrifice to ſome falſe Deity, and very likely to *Chemoſh*, which was his national God, and generally thought to be the Sun.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

Various Circumſtances atteſting the Miſſion of the Prophet Eliſha. Jehoram *is beſieged by* Ben-hadad, *who raiſes the Siege, and is afterwards ſtrangled by* Hazael. *Flagrant Impieties of* Jehoram. *The Prophet* Eliſha *denounces dreadful Judgements againſt that abandoned Prince.*

914 BC?

1 Kings XXII 50

GOOD King *Jehoſaphat* was ſucceeded according to his own Appointment, by *Jehoram* his eldeſt Son. He bore the ſame Name with his Mother's Brother the King of *Iſrael*, and the Son of *Ahab*, who was then but newly returned to *Samaria* from the War with the *Moabites*, and brought *Eliſha* with him*.

The Prophet *Eliſha* having received notice of a Conſpiracy againſt the Life of *Jehoram*, and that *Ben-hadad* had treacherouſly planted an Ambuſh to ſurprize him, he gave the King Intelligence of it, with a Caution to avoid a certain Place, where the *Syrians* had laid a Plot to enſnare him. This Precaution kept the King from going a hunting, and diſappointed the Plot. But *Ben-hadad* was ſo enraged when he found his malicious Contrivance defeated, that he reviled his

* The holy Scriptures make mention of ſeveral memorable Paſſages of that Prophet, which we ſhall account well worthy our Notice of in this Hiſtory; amongſt the reſt is the following. The Wife of *Obadiah*, *Ahab*'s Steward, applied herſelf to *Eliſha*, and told him, that he was no Stranger to the outrageous Violence of *Jezabel* againſt the Prophets, and that her Huſband concealed and preſerved a hundred of them from Deſtruction, and took up Money upon his own Credit to feed them while they were in the Cave; but that her Huſband being now dead, the Creditors threatened to make Slaves of her and her Children for

Domeſticks as a Set of Traitors, threatening them with no leſs than Death itſelf, for diſcovering a Deſign that no other Perſons were privy to but themſelves. One of his Servants made Anſwer, that he need not accuſe his Friends and Domeſticks of Treaſon, or ſuſpect that any of the Party he had ſent to intercept the Enemy, had betrayed his Counſels, while he had *Eliſha* for a Spy upon him, who was perpetually prying into his Ways and Actions, on his Maſter's Behalf; who had the Faculty of diving into the moſt ſecret of his Deſigns.

The King immediately ſent his Scouts abroad to enquire after *Eliſha*, and learn where he was; and in a ſhort Time Word was brought him, that he might be found at *Dothan*. Upon this Intelligence he immediately diſpatched Horſemen and Chariots to apprehend him. They went and beſet the Town by Night, ſo that there was no Poſſibility of coming in or going out; early the next Morning, a Servant of the Prophet's ran trembling to his Maſter, to acquaint him that the Town was beſet with a Body of the Enemy, which were come to apprehend him. *Eliſha* bad him be courageous, nor fear even an Army, as his Truſt and Confidence was in the Goodneſs and Power of an over-ruling Providence; and prayed to God for ſome ſpecial Token of his Preſence and Protection, that might confirm his Servant in a fearleſs Reſignation to his Holy Will and Pleaſure.

The Prophet's Prayers were heard, and there appeared forthwith, in the Sight of the Servant, a Multitude of Horſes and Chariots round about *Eliſha*, as a Guard upon his Perſon. The Conſideration of this Succour, as the Servant underſtood it to be, put him out of all Fear of any further Danger for his Maſter.

After this Viſion the Prophet prayed once again that God would caſt a Miſt before the Eyes of theſe People, and ſtrike them with a Blindneſs, that they might not ſee, ſo as to diſcern him from another Man. Upon the granting of this Requeſt alſo, *Eliſha* caſt himſelf into the Middle of their Troops, and paſſing from one to another, required for what, or for whom they ſought.

On their informing him, that they ſought for *Eliſha* the Prophet, he aſſured them, that if they would fol-

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for the Debt; wherefore ſhe entreated him for her Huſband's Sake to procure her ſome preſent Relief: Upon this the Prophet aſk'd her what ſhe had in the Houſe, ſhe replied only a little Oil in a Cruiſe.

The Prophet then bad her go borrow as many empty Pots, or Veſſels, of her Neighbours, as ſhe could get, and keep her Chamber door ſhut, and put Oil into all thoſe Veſſels; for God would fill them all.

The Widow did as ſhe was ordered; and after the diſtributing of the Oil, ſhe came back again to the Prophet, and gave him a particular Account of what ſhe had done, who adviſed her to ſell the Oil, and diſcharge the Debts; for there would be ſomewhat remaining, after Satisfaction given to the Creditors, for the Relief of her Children. By this Means ſhe delivered herſelf from a troubleſome Obligation.

low

low him, he would conduct them to the Place where they might apprehend him.

Encouraged by this Promiſe, they followed him without any Scruple, till he brought them into *Samaria*.

Upon their Entrance into the City, the Prophet bad *Jehoram* cauſe the Gates to be ſhut, and the *Syrians* to be ſurrounded.

Upon this Occaſion *Eliſha* offered up a third Prayer; which was, that God would reſtore the *Syrians* to their Sight again; whereupon their Eyes were opened; and to their great Aſtoniſhment and Admiration, they found themſelves encloſed up in an Enemy's Town, in the Hands, and entirely at the Mercy of their Adverſaries.

While the *Syrians* were involved in this Dilemma, and perplexed concerning the Means of extricating themſelves, the King propoſed to the Prophet the putting of them all to Death; which he abſolutely oppoſed, as proceeding incompatible with his Honour and Juſtice; and only to be allowed in Caſes of Battle. He alſo obſerved, that thoſe People were guilty of no Act of Hoſtility upon his Country, and only brought thither by the Will and Power of God, without any malicious Intention, or ſo much as the bare Knowledge of what they did; and therefore gave it his Opinion, that it would redound moſt to his Character to treat them with Hoſpitality and Reſpect, and then leave them to their Diſcretion.

Jehoram took the Prophet's Advice, gave them a ſplendid and liberal Entertainment, and ſo ſent them back again unhurt and ſafe to their Maſter.

At their Return, they gave the King ſo particular an Account of this wonderful Adventure, that his Conſcience was ſtruck, upon the hearing of it, with a Conviction, that the Hand of God was manifeſtly in this Prodigy, and that what the Prophet delivered in the Name of God, was no other than the Dictate of a divine Inſpiration.

After this Time, *Ben-hadad* never entered into any ſecret Practice againſt the King of *Iſrael*, but reſolved to make open War upon him, relying on his great Strength and Numbers.

Upon this Reſolution, *Ben-hadad* raiſed a mighty Army, and marched with his whole Force againſt *Jehoram*, who finding himſelf too weak to venture his all upon the Event, of a Field-Battle, kept himſelf within the Walls of *Samaria*, where he had good Works, and Defences. It was a ſtrong Place, and *Ben-hadad* therefore in ſome Doubt, whether to attempt it by Aſſault, or by Famine; however Siege was laid to the Town, and the Garriſon reduced to ſo miſerable a Scarcity of Proviſions, that an Aſs's Head ſold for* fourſcore

* The Pieces here meant, according to the beſt Authors; they weighed nine Ounces, two Penny Weights, and twelve Grains, and in Value amount to two Pounds, five ſhillings, and Seven-pence Half-penny, Engliſh Money.

The

Pieces of Silver, and a ‡ Pint and an half of Pigeon's Dung (for ſeaſoning) for * five Pieces.

In this Extremity, nothing gave the King ſo much Concern, as an Apprehenſion that ſome Perſon might betray the Place to the Enemy, under the Force and Neceſſity of an inſupportable Famine; ſo that he every Day viſited the Walls and the Guards, took Care that no Spies ſhould enter privately into the Town, and had a vigilant Eye upon all the Motions and Practices of the Garriſon and Inhabitants.

As the King was attending his Buſineſs, there came a Woman crying to him for Help; and *Jeboram* ſuppoſing ſhe had come to beg of him, turned her off with this angry Rebuke, *I have no Barns nor Wine-preſſes; and what have I to ſupply your Wants?*

The Woman informing him, She did not come to beg his Proviſion, but to implore his Juſtice, and deſire that he would do her Right in a Controverſy between her and another Woman.

The King aſked her, What it was? and ſhe anſwered to this Effect, *A certain Neighbour, and myſelf, that were ready to die for Want of Food,* 29 *came to an Agreement between ourſelves, having each of us a little Male Child, to eat our Children by Turns, meerly to preſerve Life. Mine was killed and dreſſed Yeſterday, and ſhe had her Part of it; and now I ſhould have Part of her Child, ſhe breaks her Word with me, and has concealed him.*

Jeboram, ſtruck with Grief and Horror, rent his Garment, exclaiming, that he never knew what it was to be perfectly miſerable, till that Inſtant; and that all this might have been prevented, by a Word, if the Prophet would have interceded with God for him. But that he would take the Forfeit of his Life for it; and in that Heat diſpatched an Officer to cut off his Head, who immediately ſet forward upon this Commiſſion.

The outrageous Diſpleaſure of the King's was no Secret to *Eliſha*, who told his Diſciples, that *Jeboram*, that Son of a Murderer, had ſent an Officer, who was then upon his Way, to take off his Head; wherefore (addreſſing himſelf to them) do you watch and obſerve him; and when he comes near the Houſe, be ſure to ſhut the Door upon him, and detain him till the King himſelf ſhall come up, who hath now changed his Mind, and is haſtening after as faſt as poſſible to prevent Miſchief.

They watched as they were directed, ſhut the Door upon the Men when they came, and kept them out till *Jeboram* appeared himſelf, who made all poſſible Haſte, leſt he

‡ The Word we have here tranſlated a Pint and an Half, is neareſt to that Quantity of our Meaſure.

* Five weighed Eleven Penny-weights, nine Grains and an Half, and were in Value worth Two Shillings and Ten-pence, ſeven Eighths.

ſhould

ſhould be too late to countermand the Execution of the Order, and to ſave the Prophet's Life.

When *Jehoram* came to him, he upbraided the Prophet with Inhumanity, in being capable of beholding the extreme Diſtreſs of ſo many wretched Perſons, without once interceeding with God for their Relief.

The Prophet gave him for Anſwer this Promiſe and Aſſurance, That by the ſame Hour the next Day, *Samaria* ſhould be ſo abundantly ſtored with all Sorts of Neceſſaries of Life, that a Meaſure of fine Flour ſhould be ſold publicly in the Market for one Shekel, and two Meaſures of Barley at the ſame Rate.

The King and the Court made no Doubt of the Truth of his Predictions, having had ſo many Proofs of their Authority and Credit; ſo that they comforted themſelves upon the Preſage, as if it had been a Thing already accompliſhed, and made their preſent Difficulties eaſy, by the Hope of what was to come; but a certain favourite Officer of the King, who commanded a third Part of the Army, thus ludicrouſly addreſſed the Prophet, as the King was leaning upon him, in a familiar Way, *Eliſha, we may as well believe, that it ſhall rain Flour and Barley from Heaven, as what you have now foretold; for it ſeems to me incredible, even to a Degree of Impoſſibility.*

The Prophet replied, Make no Queſtion of it; for you ſhall ſee it. But you ſhall only ſee it, without enjoying it. Which Prediction was made good.

It was a Cuſtom among the *Samaritans*, that no leprous Perſon ſhould be ſuffered to live within the Walls of the City; and at this Time there were four Lepers, who had their Habitations without the Gates.

The Famine in the City was ſo extreme, that there was no Proviſion to be expected from thence; ſo that whether they went back into the Town, or ſtaid where they were, they had certain Death before them.

Upon this Deliberation they took a Reſolution of caſting themſelves upon the Enemy. If they ſpared them they ſhould live; or if they put them to Death, it would be a gentler Way of Diſpatch. They all agreed in this Propoſal, as the beſt Expedient they could purſue, and ſo ſlip away by Night into the Enemy's Camp.

At this critical Moment it pleaſed God to poſſeſs the *Syrians* with a Panic, upon the imaginary Noiſe of Horſes and armed Men breaking in upon them; and with the Strength of this Apprehenſion, they all ran in a great Conſternation to *Ben-hadad*, and told him that *Jehoram*'s Confederate King of *Egypt*, and of the Iſlands, was juſt at hand, and within hearing of the March of the Army. He gave the more Credit to the Deluſion, as he himſelf laboured under the ſame falſe Imagination; ſo that in this Conſternation the whole Army diſperſed, and every Man betook himſelf to flight, leaving their Horſes, Carriages, Baggage, and their whole Treaſure in the Camp.

When the Lepers approached the Camp of the *Syrians*, they heard not

VII the leaſt Stir; and advancing ſtill farther, found great Plenty of Stores and Proviſions, but the Place deſerted; ſo that having eat and drank, they carried off much valuable Plunder without being diſcovered by the Enemy.

They loaded themſelves four Times, and buried their Burdens in a Hole they dug for that Purpoſe without the Camp. As they might now reaſonably conclude the Enemy was drawn off, they blamed themſelves for not giving *Jeboram* and the Citizens Notice of their Deſertion, upon the firſt Diſcovery: wherefore they haſtened back to *Samaria*, calling aloud to the Watch upon the Walls, that the Enemy had totally abandoned their Camp; and upon this Intelligence, being inſtantly conveyed to the King's Guards, *Jeboram* called a Council of his Friends and Officers, and gave it as his Opinion, that it was a Stratagem to draw his People into an Ambuſh.

Saying they might perhaps deſpair of
12 ſtarving us, and therefore have Recourſe to this Invention to ſurprize us. And if they ſhould but draw us out to take Poſſeſſion of the Booty, they might make an Excurtion upon us from their Places of Retirement, cut our Men to Pieces, and with great Eaſe make themſelves Maſters of the City.

For theſe Reaſons therefore I am for providing againſt their Treachery, and being the more wary for this Pretence. I cannot think they are fled away, and deem it very imprudent to venture the main Chance upon the Credit of this Intelligence.

One of the Council ſtood up, and
13 with due Reſpect to the King's Propoſal, obſerved, that it was neceſſary at ſuch a Juncture to ſend out Scouts, as far as *Jordan*; obſerving, that if they ſhould happen to be taken, it might ſerve for a Warning to others. However that they ſhould not expoſe themſelves too much, leſt being detected, they fruſtrated the Deſign of their Project.

The King was much of the Counſellor's Opinion, and ſent his Scouts immediately for Intelligence; who returned ſoon after with this Report, That they had been ſo far without ſeeing ſo much as one Enemy; but
16 that they ſaw Arms, Corn, and ſeveral Bundles of Things upon the Way, from whence they concluded that the *Syrians* had thrown them down in order to make their Flight the more expeditious.

The King upon this Information ſent out his People to plunder *Benhadad*'s Camp, where they found a rich Booty, in Gold, Silver, Horſes, and ſeveral Sorts of Beaſts; beſide an incredible Proviſion of Grain.

Having attained ſo vaſt a Quantity, the People forgot their former Scarcity; for two Meaſures of Barley
18 were ſold for one Shekel, and a Meaſure of Flour at the ſame Price, according to the Prediction of *Eliſha*.

But the Officer that commanded
17 the third Part of the Army, had no Benefit from this Booty, being poſted at the Gate, by the King's Command,

mand, to keep the People in Order, that they might not crowd one another to Death upon the Sally they were to make, he himſelf was trodden to Death in the Throng, as a Judgment that befel him for his Unbelief, in giving ſo little Heed to what *Eliſha* foretold.

Ben-hadad was by this Time got ſafe to *Damaſcus*; and when he underſtood that the Alarm of Chariots and Horſemen, which had excited ſuch Fear and Confuſion throughout his Army, aroſe from an Apprehenſion rather then Reality, he looked upon it as a Declaration from Heaven againſt him; and the Anxiety ariſing therefrom brought upon him a dangerous Sickneſs.

Eliſha then went towards *Damaſcus*; and *Be-nhadad* being informed where he was, ſent *Hazael*, his particular and truſty Friend, with a Compliment and magnificent Preſents to meet him, and to enquire whether the King ſhould out-live his Diſeaſe or not, and what would be the iſſue of it. *Hazael* took forty Camels, and loading them with the choiceſt Curioſites that the Court or Country afforded, advanced with them towards *Eliſha*; meeting him upon the Way, he ſaluted him with great Reverence, in the Name, and by the Order of King *Ben-hadad*, telling him, that he had Commiſſion to offer him thoſe Preſents, and likewiſe to adviſe with him about his Diſeaſe, whether or no he might hope for Relief.

The Prophet told *Hazael* that the King was to die; but charged him to conceal it from his Maſter. This greatly affected *Hazael*, *Eliſha* weeping, in the Contemplation of the Miſeries the People were to endure after the Deceaſe of *Ben-hadad*; *Hazael* aſked the Prophet what might be the Cauſe of that exceſſive Grief? *Eliſha* thus replied, *I cannot forbear weeping to think of the Calamities that you yourſelf are to bring upon the* Iſraelites. *You ſhall put the beſt of their Men to the Sword, burn their walled Cities, daſh their Children to Death againſt the Stones, and rip up the Children out of the Bellies of their Mothers. Upon* Hazael's *Enquiry, how it was for him to compaſs all this Miſchief? The Prophet informed him that he ſhould reign in* Syria. Upon this Diſcourſe *Hazael* left him, and returned to his Maſter, with an Account that he ſhould recover of his Diſtemper.

On the Day following he made the King a Viſit; and taking his Opportunity, ſtrangled him with a wet Cloth, and took Poſſeſſion of his Palace and Government. He was a Man of great Intereſt and Reputation with the People of *Syria* and *Damaſcus*; inſomuch, that for many ſucceſſive Years the Memory of *Ben-hadad* and of *Hazael* his Succeſſor, was celebrated amongſt the *Syrians* with divine Honours, not only for their Bounty and Generoſity in general, but in particular for the Magnificence of the Temples they erected at *Damaſcus*, and the Cave they took for the Honour and Ornament of the City. Their Images were carried about

about in Proceſſion, as a token of the Veneration in which they were univerſally held.

The Death of *Ben-hadad* ſet the Heart of *Jehoram*, the King of *Iſrael*, much at Eaſe, as it afforded him a Suſpenſion from Wars and Broils, and the Comfort of ſeeing himſelf once again in a State of Peace. But *Jehoram* the King of *Judah*, was no ſooner veſted with the Sovereignty, than he ſullied his regal Character with the Slaughter of his Brothers, and his Father's Friends, and the Commiſſion of ſuch Outrages, as if he had been upon a Competition with the worſt of former Kings, which ſhould be the wickedeſt; being prompted by his Wife *Gotholiah*, the Daughter of *Ahab*, who proved the Inſtrument of his Idolatrous Defection from the true Worſhip, to the Service of Strange Gods.

Though God would moſt certainly ſtand firm to the Promiſe he made to King *David*, that he would never utterly extinguiſh the whole Race, *Jehoram* did all that he could to provoke him to a total Extirpation, by a daily Courſe of Impieties and Abominations.

Edom at this Time revolted from *Jehoram*, and the Inhabitants made way to their Apoſtacy by the murdering of their King (who had ever been faithful to *Jehoſaphat*) and by ſetting up another in his Place.

In Conſequence of this Indignity, the King made a ſpeedy Incurſion by Night, with a Body of Horſe and Charioteers into the Enemy's Quarters. But they could only avenge themſelves, by making ſome Depredations on the Borders, not daring to make farther Progreſs into the Country.

This Expedition was ſo far from ſtriking any Sort of Terror or Apprehenſion into the Deſerters, that, on the contrary, it ſerved for an Encouragement to others to follow the Example of their Leaders, and to ſhake off their Yoke likewiſe. *Libnah*, rebelling alſo at the ſame Time. Such, in ſhort, was the Madneſs and Folly of *Jehoram*, that he forced the *Iſraelites* up to the Groves and High Places of the Mountains, and there to worſhip falſe Gods.

He went on for ſome Time in the Defiance and Contempt of Law and Religion, and all that could be ſacred either in Heaven or Earth, till in the End there came a menacing Letter from the Prophet *Eliſha* to him, to this Effect.

That ſince he had audaciouſly and wilfully ſet himſelf up againſt the Practice and Example of his Forefathers, and eſpouſed the impious Superſtition of the Iſraelites; *and not reſting there neither, had likewiſe debauched the Tribe of* Judah, *and the Citizens of* Jeruſalem, *from the Religion of their Country, into the Paganiſh Superſtitions of Idolatry, in making Gods of Images, after the Example of* Ahab's *Violence upon his People, to force them into theſe Abominations.*

After the doing of all this, and the polluting his Hands in the Blood of his own Brothers, and other good and righteous Men, this Judgment was

was pronounced againſt him, in the before-mentioned Letter.

That his Family, and his People, ſhould fall into the Hands of a mercileſs Enemy, that ſhould neither ſpare Women or Children. That he himſelf ſhould be tormented with a lingering Pain in his Bowels, till by little and little, they ſhould rot and fall out.

This was to be the miſerable Condition that ſhould bring him at laſt, though too late, to a Senſe and a Sight of his Wickedneſs.

In fine, this was the Subſtance of the Writing that was delivered to *Jehoram* in the Name of *Eliſha*.

CHAP. II.

The Prophet's Prediction accompliſhed in the miſerable End of Jehoram, *King of* Judah. *Extirpation of the Family of* Ahab, *by the Hand of* Jehu. *Deſtruction of the Temple, dedicated to the Idol* Baal. Ahab's *Daughter ſeeks Revenge upon the Houſe of* David. *Her Deſign fruſtrated. And Judgment falls upon her own Head.*

SOME Time after this, an Army of *Arabians* from the Borders of *Ethiopia*, together with a Number of other Barbarians, broke into the Kingdom of *Jehoram*, ravaged the Country, rifled the Palace, put the King's Wife to the Sword, and all his Children, *Ahaziah* only excepted, who very narrowly eſcaped the Fury of the Enemy.

The King after this public Calamity, fell into a Diſeaſe, which proved according to the Prophet's Prediction, a kind of Plague in the Bowels, which proved mortal, and carried him off in the extremeſt Agony.

The People derided his Calamity, inferring from the great Degree of his Puniſhment, the aggravated Nature of his Crimes, which had incurred the juſt Judgment of an incenſed God.

They would neither vouchſafe him a Royal Funeral, nor a Place in his Father's Monument.

He lived forty Years, and reigned eight. And the People of *Judah* placed *Ahaziah* upon the Throne of his Father.

Jehoram, King of the *Iſraelites*, was in Hopes, after the Death of *Ben-hadad*, that he might recover *Ramoth Gilead*; and, with that Deſign he levied a great Army, and ſat down before it.

At the Siege he received a Wound with an Arrow from the Bow of a *Syrian*. It was not Mortal; yet he was obliged to withdraw to the City of *Jezreel* for the Convenience of the Cure, leaving his whole Army behind him at the Siege of *Ramoth*, under the Command of *Jehu*, the Son of *Nimſhi*, who took the Town by Force.

Jehoram propoſed, upon his Recovery, to make War upon the *Syrians*; and in the mean Time *Eliſha* ſent one of his Diſciples, with holy Oil, to *Ramoth*, there to anoint and declare *Jehu* King, and to do it

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in the Name of God, and by his Authority and Order.

The Prophet gave him ſome other Things in Charge alſo, and commanded him to be as expeditious as he could, making no Perſon privy to his Journey.

When he came to the Town, he found *Jehu* ſitting with the head Officers of the Army, as was foretold him by *Eliſha*; he therefore went up to him, and gave him to underſtand, that he deſired to have a ſhort Conference with him in private.

Jehu roſe up immediately, and the Meſſenger following him into his Apartment, and the young Man took out the Oil, and poured it on his Head; informing him, That God had choſen him King, for the Deſtruction of the Houſe of *Ahab*, and to revenge the Blood of the Prophets, which againſt all Juſtice was ſpilt by *Jezabel*; and that as *Jehoram*, the Son of *Nebat*, and after him the Family of *Baaſha*, were utterly rooted out, and deſtroyed for their Wickedneſs; ſo there ſhould be no Remainder left of the wicked Stock of *Ahab*.

As ſoon as he had ſpoken thoſe Words he conveyed himſelf out of the Apartment in Haſte, and with all imaginable Privacy; *Jehu* returning forthwith to his Place among the Commanders.

The Officers were very deſirous of knowing the Import of the young Man's Embaſſy; declaring that his Looks indicated Inſanity. *Jehu* to diſguiſe the Fact appeared to acquieſce in their Opinion; however as they perſiſted in the moſt earneſt Enquiry, he told them in plain Terms that he came to him with a Meſſage from God to pronounce him King.

At theſe Words, the Commanders took every Man his Cloak, and laid them one upon another for *Jehu* to ſit down upon, inſtead of a Throne; and when he had taken his Place, they all ſaluted him King, with Acclamations, Benedictions, and the Sound of Horns and Trumpets, to congratulate his Acceſſion to the Throne.

Jehoram was now under the Surgeon's Hands at *Jezreel* for the Wound he had received at the Siege of *Ramoth*; and his Siſter's Son *Ahaziah* was there at the ſame Time to viſit him as he lay Sick of his Wounds; ſo that *Jehu* took this Opportunity of Marching with his Army to *Jezreel*, where he might ſurprize them both at once: precautioning his Soldiers, as a Proof of their Fidelity to him, neither directly nor indirectly to give *Jehoram* any Knowledge or Intimation of the Matter.

The Soldiers executed their Orders with great Cheerfulneſs, poſſeſſing themſelves of all the Paſſes and Avenues of the Town, and keeping ſo ſtrict a Guard upon them, that it was morally impoſſible to convey any Intelligence into the Place without Diſcovery.

While this was doing, *Jehu* mounts his Chariot, and with a Party of Choice Men advanced with all Expedition toward the City.

The King had a Scout abroad to obſerve what People paſſed that Way, and

and his Scout finding *Jehu* at the Head of the Troops, poſted away immediately to *Jehoram* with Tidings of a Body of Horſe being upon their March.

17 The King diſpatched an Horſeman, with Inſtructions to go up towards the Party, and learn who they were. The Meſſenger went, and did according to his Inſtructions, inquiring alſo into the State of the Army; for the King, he ſaid was deſirous of knowing.

Jehu admoniſhed him not to be anxious concerning the Intent of thoſe Preparations, but to fall into the 18 Rear and march with them. The Man complied, and the Scout preſently gave the King Notice, that his Meſſenger had joined the Troops. *Jehoram*, upon this, ſent again the ſame Inſtructions, and with the very ſame Succeſs; when receiving no Satisfaction, he took his Chariot himſelf, and *Ahaziah* the King of *Judah* along with him, who, being his Kinſman, was come there to viſit him; as they went out together to meet *Jehu*, who moved very leiſurely, and coming into the Field of *Naboth*, *Jehoram* aſked him concerning the Deſtination of his Army, when *Jehu* in his Reply, caſt ſome poignant Reflections upon the Whoredoms and Witchcraft of his Mother. This cauſed *Jehoram* to ſuſpect the Security of his Situation, and determined to decamp as ſoon as poſſible: He therefore told *Ahaziah* that he was betrayed; and as he was haſtening to make his Eſcape, *Jehu* ſhot 24 him through the Heart with an Arrow, ſo that he dropped from his Chariot, and then commanded *Bidkar*, the Captain of a third Part of the Army, to take the Carcaſs, and caſt it out into the Field of *Naboth*, calling to Mind what the Prophet *Elijah* had formerly ſaid to his Father *Ahab*; viz. that he and his Family were to periſh in that Place; which he himſelf had heard as he was ſitting in a Chariot behind *Ahab*; and every Thing fell out accordingly. Upon the Death of *Jehoram*, *Ahaziah* apprehending his own Life to be in Danger, turned off his Chariot into a by Way, where he thought *Jehu* would not find him; but following him however to a certain Bank, he wounded him with an Arrow, which cauſed him to leave his Chariot, and take Horſe to ſave himſelf by Flight. He got off to the City of *Megiddo*, where he ſoon after died of his Wound; from whence he was carried to *Jeruſalem*, and there buried, after he had reigned one Year, then exceeding even the Abomination of his Father.

When *Jehu* came into *Jezreel*, *Jezabel* planted herſelf in a Turret-Window, arrayed in a moſt ſuperb Attire, to ſee his Entry. As he paſſed by her ſhe ſcoffingly ſaid, *Had* Zimri *Peace, who ſlew his Maſter? Jehu*, ſeeing the Woman, and hearing theſe Words, called out to her to know who ſhe was, and bid her come down; but on not coming immediately, he commanded the Eunuchs that were then about her to caſt her down Headlong.

They obeyed his Order, and the Walls

Walls were ſtained with the Blood that guſhed from her Body in the Fall. As ſhe lay upon the Earth, the Horſemen rode over the Carcaſs, and trampled her to Death.

After this, *Jehu* and his Friends marched forward to the Palace to refreſh themſelves. When they had been there ſome time, *Jehu* ordered *Jezabel*'s Servants, out of Reſpect to her Quality, to ſee their Miſtreſs buried; reminding them that ſhe was a King's Daughter: When they came to look for the Body, there was nothing to be found but a Piece of the Skull, the Palms of her Hands, and the Soles of her Feet; the Dogs having eat up all the reſt.

This Circumſtance confirmed *Jehu* more and more in the Authenticity of *Elijah*'s Prediction, which he had foretold, *That Dogs ſhould eat the Fleſh of* Jezabel *in the Field of* Jezreel.

Ahab had ſeventy Sons, who reſided at this Time in *Samaria*, where they were brought up: *Jehu* wrote two Letters thither, one to the Governors, and the other to the Magiſtrates of the Place, wherein he gave them to underſtand, that being well provided with Horſes, Men, Arms, Chariots, and other Neceſſaries for War, beſide fortified Towns and ſtrong Holds, it was incumbent on them, to ſelect from the Race of *Ahab*, a Youth of the moſt amiable Qualifications, both natural and acquired, and veſt him with the Regal Dignity, in order to revenge the Death of their Lord and Maſter, and to try how they ſtood affected to his Intereſt.

The Perſons to whom theſe Letters were addreſſed, read them over with great Care and Attention, and agreeing upon the whole, that it would not be ſafe, under their Circumſtances, to oppoſe a Power which had already been too mighty for two great Kings; they reſolved to make him an Anſwer as evaſive and inconcluſive as poſſible, implying upon the whole, that they owed Allegiance to no other Prince but him, at whoſe Devotion they ſhould ever thankfully and obediently remain.

Jehu wrote them Word back, That if they favoured his Intereſt, they ſhould forthwith ſend him the Heads of all *Ahab*'s Sons, as a Token and Teſtimony of their Readineſs to ſerve him.

The Magiſtrates and the young Mens Tutors conferred together about it; and, without any Scruple of Tenderneſs or Compaſſion, agreed among themſelves to cut off all their Heads, and ſend them in Baſkets to *Jezreel*.

The King and his Friends were at Supper when the News was brought him that the Heads were come: So he ordered them to be laid in two Heaps before the Gate, on each Side one; and the next Morning going out to view them, thus addreſſed himſelf to the People, *I had a Hand in the Death of my Maſter; but whoſe doing is all this?* His Deſign was to ſatisfy the People that this Rigour toward the Houſe of *Ahab* was not only according to the Will of God, but anſwerable to what God himſelf had foretold by the Mouth of the Prophet.

phet. He deſtroyed as many of the Family of *Ahab* as he could find, and returned afterward to *Samaria*.

Falling into company upon the Way with ſeveral of the Kindred of *Ahaziah*, King of *Jeruſalem*, he aſked them whither they were going? They anſwered, they were going to pay their Duty to *Jehoram* and King *Ahaziah*, having heard nothing as yet of their Death by the Hand of *Jehu*.

There were two and forty of them in Number, and *Jehu* cauſed them all to be ſlain. He happened afterward to meet with *Jehonadab*, his particular Friend, and a very juſt Man; who, after the firſt Salutation, highly commended him for his Zeal in rooting out the Race and Family of wicked *Ahab*, according to the command and Appointment of God.

Jehu then invited him into his Chariot, to go with him to *Samaria*; telling him that he ſhould now ſee he would ſpare no Apoſtates, but put all the falſe Prieſts and Prophets to the Sword, even every Man that had ſeduced the People from the Religion of their Forefathers into the idolatrous Worſhip of falſe Gods; accounting it a Matter of Joy for a good Man to ſee the wicked puniſhed according to their Deſerts.

Jehonadab ſubmitted to the King's Pleaſure, and waited upon him in his Chariot to the City. *Jehu*, as ſoon as they came thither, cauſed ſtrict Search to be made for *Ahab*'s Relations, and put them all to Death as faſt as he found them; being reſolved that none of *Ahab*'s falſe Prophets, or profane Prieſts, ſhould eſcape him, he circumvented them all by Stratagem.

He appointed the People to meet him in an Aſſembly, telling them, *That if* Ahab *ſerved* Baal *a little*, Jehu *ſhould ſerve him twice as much, for he would worſhip double the Number; therefore he would have all the Prieſts and Prophets of* Baal *to be preſent to a ſingle Man; for he had a great Sacrifice to offer to the God of* Ahab, *whom they called* Baal, *and it ſhould be Death for any Prieſt to abſent himſelf.*

Thus he ſent his Meſſengers up and down *Iſrael*, to ſummon the Prieſts up to *Samaria* at the appointed Day.

Upon their arrival, they had Veſtments given them, which they put on. So *Jehu* took *Jehonadab* with him into the Houſe of *Baal*, where ſtrict Search was made, that there might not be any Perſon there preſent, more than the Servants of *Baal*, for *Jehu* would not ſuffer (as he ſaid) any profane Intruder to intermix in the holy Worſhip.

When *Jehu* found that they were all *Baalites*, and juſt entering upon the Ceremony, he had fourſcore Men ſet ready at the Door, that waited only the Word of Command to break in upon the Apoſtates.

Their Orders were to put all the falſe Prophets to the Sword, and to vindicate the Religion of their Anceſtors, under this Condition and Penalty, That whoever ſhould ſpare the Life of but any one of them, his Life ſhould anſwer for the other's.

The Word was given, and they executed their Commiſſion to the uttermoſt Rigour. They ſlew them all to a Man, ſet Fire to the Palace itſelf, and ſo purged the City of all its ſacrilegious Abominations.

This *Baal* was the *Syrian*'s Idol, to whom *Ahab* dedicated an Altar in *Samaria*, for the Sake of *Ithobal* his Father-in-Law, King of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and aſſigned them Prieſts and Prophets, and other Neceſſaries appertaining to their Religion.

Now *Jehu* aboliſhed the Rites and Ceremonies of this Worſhip, but permitted the *Iſraelites* to go on ſtill in the Ordination of their Golden Calves.

This Severity againſt that impious Generation was ſo far pleaſing to God, that he ſignified to him by his Prophet, that his Poſterity ſhould ſit upon the Throne of *Iſrael* to the fourth Generation.

When *Athaliah*, the Daughter of *Ahab* King of *Iſrael*, and the Widow of *Jehoram* King of *Judah*, came to underſtand what Havock *Jehu* had made, in her Father's wicked Family, King *Jehoram* her Brother aſſaſſinated, her Son *Ahaziah* dead of his Wound, and the whole Stock upon the Point of being utterly rooted out, ſhe formed a Reſolution of re-eſtabliſhing the ſame Procedure upon the Houſe of *David*, and not to leave ſo much as one Man alive of the Family, to pretend to the Kingdom of *Judah*.

This was her Determination, nor was it wanting to her Aſſiduity that it was not executed. For of all the Sons of *Ahaziah*, there was only one that eſcaped; the Manner of his Deliverance was as follows, *Jehoſheba*, the Siſter of *Ahaziah*, and the Wife of *Jehoiada* the High Prieſt, coming into the Palace, found a Male Child of about a Year, whoſe Name was *Jehoaſh*, among the dead Bodies of the Sons of *Ahaziah*, which the Nurſe had hid there.

She conveyed it away to her own Lodgings, and from thence to the Temple, where ſhe concealed it, thro' the whole ſix Years of *Athaliah*'s Reign over *Jeruſalem*, and the two Tribes, and no one of her Council all the while was privy to the Secret but her own Huſband.

In the ſeventh Year *Jehoiada* entered into an Aſſociation with five Captains, to force the Government out of *Athaliah*'s Hand, and transfer it to the right Heir; ſhewing them the Child that was then preſent.

Their Buſineſs was now only to interchange an Oath of Faith and Secreſy, and ſo apply themſelves to the Execution of the Deſign; which they did immediately, but not without great Hope of Succeſs.

The Captains that he had engaged in this Enterprize, travelled all over the Country, with Summons to the Prieſts and Levites, and ſeveral of the principal Men in their Tribes, in the High-Prieſt's Name, to go up to *Jeruſalem*, where *Jehoiada* told them, that they were now called up for Advice, about the common Good of the Public; and that he would lay the whole Matter before

fore them; but it muſt be kept private, and the Caſe not only required Secreſy, but Help.

Upon this, he gave them their Oath of Secreſy, and then told them the whole Story, without any Reſerve, ſhewing them the Child likewiſe that he had taken into his Care and preſerved; and thus addreſſing them, ſaid,

This Child is your King, and a Branch of that Family, which God had promiſed and foretold, ſhall never be wanting to ſupply the Throne of David.

Now it is my Advice, that you divide yourſelves into three Bodies; one third to be upon the Guard of the King in the Temple; a ſecond third to ſecure the Paſſes and Avenues that lead to it; and the Remainder to guard the open Gate that leads to the Palace.

As for thoſe that have no Arms, let them be in the Temple, if they think fit; but let no armed Man be admitted there, if he be a Prieſt.

Jehoiada gave Order alſo for a ſelect Number of Prieſts and Levites to ſtand with a drawn Sword, as a Guard about the King's Perſon, and to kill any Man that ſhould preſs into the Temple with a Weapon about him, in order to ſecure the Life and Safety of the King.

They were all pleaſed with the Advice and Contrivance of the High-Prieſt. So that the next thing to be done was the putting the Project in Execution.

Jehoiada, upon this, opened a Magazine of Armour, that *David* had long ſince ſtored up in the Temple, delivering out Lances, Arrows, and what other Military Weapons that were there depoſited, to the Centurians, Prieſts and Levites, who planted themſelves as a Guard upon the Temple quite round it; and ſo ſtrictly beſet the Doors, that not a Perſon was let in that had no Buſineſs there.

The Child was now produced with a Royal Crown upon his Head; and being anointed with holy Oil, according to Cuſtom, the High-Prieſt pronounced him King; which Solemnity was accompanied with innumerable Acclamations, by the People in general.

The Clamour of this Outcry and Proclamation was a terrible Surprize. *Athaliah*, who immediately haſted away with her Guards, from the Palace to the Temple, where ſhe herſelf was admitted by the Prieſt; but the Soldiers that followed her were kept out by the Guards that were poſted there by *Jehoiada* for that very Purpoſe.

So ſoon as ſhe ſaw the Child upon the Throne, with a Royal Crown upon his Head, ſhe rent her Garments, and called out with a loud Voice, Treaſon! Treaſon!

Jehoiada, on the other Side, commanded the Officers to ſeize the Woman, and carry her away to the Brook of *Kidron*, and there put her to Death, as the Temple was not to be polluted with the Blood of a Sorcereſs.

Order was likewiſe given, that if any Man ſhould attempt a Reſcue, they ſhould put him to Death. Thoſe who

who had the Charge of this Commiſſion, carried her out of the Gate by the Horſe Way, and there diſpatched her.

As ſoon as this Plot againſt *Athaliah* had taken Effect, *Jehoiada* called all the People and Soldiers together into the Temple, and adminiſtered to them an Oath of Allegiance and Fidelity to the King, for the Safety and Defence of his Perſon, and the Honour and Preſervation of his Government.

After this, the King himſelf took an Oath of religious Reverence to God, and for the Obſervance of thoſe Laws that *Moſes* received from Heaven, and tranſmitted to the People.

The Multitude thus wrought into a religious Reverence and holy Awe of the true God, and filled with juſt Indignation at Idolatry and its Abettors, haſtened in great Numbers to the Temple of *Baal* that *Athaliah*, in Concurrence with her Huſband *Jehoram* had erected, in order to ingratiate themſelves with *Ahab*, and raiſed them after they had ſlain *Mattan*, an idolatrous Prieſt.

But for the Preſervation of the holy Temple, that was committed to the Charge of the Prieſts and Levites, according to the Inſtitution of *David*, *Jehoiada* appointed two ſolemn Sacrifices to be offered up every Day, with Incenſe, according to the Direction of the Law, appointed Porters alſo out of the Number of the Levites, to prevent any Pollutions from being privately introduced.

When all Things were thus diſpoſed, *Jehoaſh* was conducted out of the Temple into the Palace, by the Captains, the Governors, and all the People, where being placed a ſecond Time upon the Throne, and received with repeated Acclamations, the People gave themſelves up for ſome Days to Mirth and Feaſting, as there was not an Individual, but rejoiced at the Death of that wicked Woman.

Jehoaſh was ſeven Years of Age when he began to reign. His Mother's Name was *Zibiah* of *Beerſheba*. He was a ſtrict Obſerver of the Laws and Religion of his Country, ſo long as *Jehoiada* lived.

When he arrived at Years of Maturity, he married two Wives, with the Approbation of the High-Prieſt, had Children by them of both Sexes, and behaved in every Reſpect becoming a Prince.

CHAP. III.

Jehoaſh *ſucceeds to the Government of* Iſrael *on the Death of* Jehu. *His pious Conduct during the Life of* Jehoiada. *Apoſtaſy after his Death. Stoneing of* Zachariah *the Prophet at his Inſtance. Siege of* Jeruſalem. Jehoaſh *is ſlain. Succeed by* Jehoahaz. *The Ruin of the* Aſſyrians *foretold. Apoſtaſy of* Amaziah *awfully puniſhed.*

IT pleaſed God in the Courſe of his wiſe Providence to chaſtiſe the *Iſraelites*; *Hazael* the *Syrian* was made the awful Inſtrument of divine Ven-

Vengeance. Accordingly he advanced into their Territories, ſpoiling all before him, and laying Waſte a great Tract of Land to the Eaſtward beyond *Jordan*, particularly in the Tribes of *Reuben*, *Gad*, and *Manaſſes*, and ſo in *Gilead* and *Baſhan*; not only burning and pillaging, but putting Man, Woman, and Child to the Sword, wherever he came, without Mercy; all this was done with little or no Oppoſition from *Jehu*, being a Man that ſpent his Time in a ſtupid Contempt of God's Religion and Holy Laws. Having reigned ſeven and twenty Years over *Iſrael*, he died and was buried at *Samaria*, *Jehoaſh* his Son ſucceeded him.

In the Days of *Jehoram* and *Athaliah*, and of their Sons, the Temple was gone to Ruin for want of Repair, ſo that *Jehoahaz* the King of *Jeruſalem* ſent for *Jehoiada* the high Prieſt, to give him Orders about it. He was commanded to ſend Prieſts and Levites into all the Quarters of his Dominions, to charge every Man at Half a Silver Shekel a Head, toward repairing the Temple.

But notwithſtanding this Command, there was nothing done toward it at preſent; for *Jehoiada* well knew, that the People would not at that Time contribute towards ſuch a Deſign. But this King in the three and twentieth Year of his Reign, finding ſo good and needful a Work to be totally forgotten and laid aſide, he charged the high Prieſt and the Levites with the Care of it once again; blaming them, in ſome Degree, for their former Neglect of Duty.

This put *Jehoiada* upon thinking himſelf how the Buſineſs might be brought about without any Grievance to the People; and in the End he fixed upon this Expedient. He cauſed a wooden Cheſt to be provided, cloſe wrought and locked, with a Slit through the Cover of it, to receive what Pieces of Money ſoever would be put into it. This was to be placed near the Altar, and the People invited to ſhew their good Will upon this Occaſion towards the Work in Hand, in Proportion to the Zeal they had to the true Religion and God's immediate Service.

The Multitude was ſo well pleaſed with the Method, that they brought in Gold and Silver, as if emulous of exceeding each other in their Donations. The Cheſt was every Day opened, the Money counted, and regiſtered by the Clerk of the Treaſury, and then locked up again by the Prieſt, who had the Keeping of the Key; and all this was done in the Preſence of the King.

When they had got Treaſure enough to begin, the King and the high Prieſt hired Carpenters, Maſons, and other Artificers; procured the largeſt and choiceſt Timber that could be provided, and went in Hand with the Reparations, employing the Overplus, (which was very conſiderable,) after the finiſhing of that Work, upon Cups, Chalices, Goblets, and other Veſſels for holy Uſes,

ever and above the Oblation of daily Sacrifices.

This Regularity was exactly obſerved while *Jehoiada* lived; but in the hundred and thirtieth Year of his Age he died; a Man of ſignal Probity and Juſtice, and ſo highly eſteemed, as a Friend to the Houſe of *David*, that his Body was depoſited in the Sepulchre of the Kings. After his Deceaſe *Jehoaſh* fell off from his former Zeal for Religion, and the Princes of the People quickly followed his Example, valuing themſelves upon the Contempt of holy Things.

Upon this abominable Apoſtaſy, both of the King and his Miniſters, God ſent Prophets to expoſtulate and reaſon with them, and to convince them of their Wickedneſs; but they were ſo hardened in their Iniquity, that neither the Example of their Forefathers, and their Families, that had been cut off and rooted out, for the ſame Contempt, nor the Threatenings of the Prophets could avail with them; but the King cauſed *Zechariah*, the Son of the high Prieſt *Jehoiada*, to be ſtoned to Death in the very Temple, without any Regard to the Merit and good Counſels of his Father.

Thus did he treat the Servant of the Lord for exhorting of both King and People to Repentance; and the Adminiſtration of equal Juſtice; with a Premonition of the grievous Judgments that would befal them, if they perſiſted in their Iniquity? *Zechariah*, with his laſt Breath, appealed to God both as his Judge, and as his Witneſs, *That the Crime he died for was only the giving of good Advice, and being the Son of a Father that had deſerved ſo well from the King; and that the Death he then ſuffered was but the Reward of thoſe Services.*

After this the Divine Vengeance overtook the King himſelf; for *Hazael*, the King of *Syria*, made an Inroad into his Country, plundered and deſtroyed *Gath*, and from thence marched to *Jeruſalem*, where himſelf had taken Sanctuary. He was ſo affrighted at the Approach of the *Syrian* Army, that he compounded for himſelf and the City, and delivered up all the Treaſure of the Temple, as well what was dedicated to God, as the Gifts of particular Kings, to purchaſe Exemption from the Danger that then threatened him, and Security for the future; *Hazael* accepted the Officer, being a prodigious Sum of Money, and ſo raiſed the Siege.

Jehoaſh, after this fell into a Fit of Sickneſs, and the Friends of *Zechariah* took their Revenge upon him by Surprize, for the Murder of the Son of the high Prieſt. He was buried at *Jeruſalem* at the Age of forty ſeven years; and though a Man of apparent Piety, at his Acceſſion to the Throne, he had fallen from the Service of God into every Kind of Abomination.

Amaziah ſucceeded *Joaſh*, his Father, in the Government of *Judah*, and in the three and twentieth Year of *Joaſh*, *Jehoabaz* the Son of *Jehu* entered into the Government of *Iſ-*

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rael in *Samaria*, and reigned ſeventeen Years; not ſo much after the Example of his Father, as after that of the worſt of his former Predeceſſors, who lived in open Defiance of God and Goodneſs.

The King of *Syria*, in the mean Time had reduced his mighty Power to the ſmall Number of ten thouſand Foot, and five hundred Horſe, overrunning ſeveral of his Cities, and killing Numbers of his People. This Calamity of the *Iſraelites* was foretold by *Eliſha* in his Prediction to *Hazael*, when he told him that he ſhould kill his Lord, and poſſeſs himſelf of the Government of *Syria* and *Damaſcus*. In this unhappy Juncture, *Jehoahaz* had Recourſe to God by Prayer and Supplication, for Deliverance from the Power and Oppreſſion of *Hazael*.

Upon his Humiliation, that gracious God, who not only cheriſhes the Innocent, but pardons the Penitent, and chuſes rather to correct and reform the Wicked, than deſtroy them, was prevailed upon to deliver him from the Burden of a ruinous War, by a timely Peace, and to reſtore his Dominions to their former State of Happineſs and Plenty.

After the Death of *Jehoahaz*, *Joaſh* his Son came to the Government of *Iſrael* and *Samaria*, in the ſeven and thirtieth Year of the Reign of *Joaſh*, King of *Judah*, this King and the King of *Jeruſalem* being both of a Name. He held the Government ſixteen Years, and reigned in the Fear of God, and proved as pious and obedient to the divine Command, as his Father had been wicked and diſobedient.

The Prophet *Eliſha* was now far advanced in Years; and being at this Time upon his Death Bed, *Joaſh* made him a Viſit in his Extremity, and out of Tenderneſs to ſee the good Man labouring in his Agonies, burſt out into Tears; calling him the Father, the Defender and Protector of his Country; obſerving that while he lived, the People were ſecure againſt all their Enemies, even without Arms, through the Benefit and Bleſſing of his Prayers; but that whenever he was taken away, they ſhould be left naked and defenceleſs, at the Mercy of the *Syrians* and other Enemies; and that therefore, for his own Part, he had infinitely rather leave the World with him, than ſtay in it without him.

This compaſſionate Softneſs wrought ſo far upon the Prophet, that to comfort the King, he called for a Bow and Arrow, laid his Hand upon it, and bad him bend it and ſhoot. He ſhot thrice, and then gave over; then *Eliſha* told him, that if he had let fly more Shafts, he ſhould have ruined and deſtroyed the whole Kingdom of the *Syrians*; but ſince he gave it off at a third Shot, he muſt content himſelf with three ſeveral Victories over them; wherein he ſhould recover the Countries they had taken from his Father.

The King went his Way upon theſe Words; and the Prophet expired ſoon after. He was a Man celebrated for his Juſtice, and without all Diſpute highly in God's Favour,

as appears by the wonderful Things he did, and the Miracles that he wrought. They gave him an honorable Interment, anſwerable to the Merit of ſo great a Saint.

It happened, after this, that a Traveller was killed upon the Way, by Thieves, and the Body thrown into the Prophet's Monument; which, upon the bare Touch of *Eliſha*, was immediately revived; ſo, that both dead and living, this Prophet wrought Miracles.

Hazael was now dead, and the Kingdom of *Syria* devolved by hereditary Right to his Son *Ben-hadad*, who was overthrown by *Joaſh* in three Battles; and all that Country recovered to the *Iſraelites*, which his Father had wreſted from them, according to the Prediction of *Eliſha*. Upon the Death of *Joaſh*, *Jeroboam* his Son entered upon the Government.

In the ſecond Year of *Joaſh* King of *Iſrael*, *Amaziah* came to the Government of the Tribe of *Judah*, in the City of *Jeruſalem*. His Mother's Name was *Jehoaddan*, a Native of the Place. He had a Reverence for Juſtice, even in his Youth; and began his Adminiſtration in revenging the Death of his Father upon thoſe Perſons who had treacherouſly murdered him, under a Cloak of Friendſhip. He brought the Aſſaſſins to publick Juſtice, but ſpared their Children, according to the Laws preſcribed by *Moſes*, who deemed it unreaſonable to puniſh the Children for the Iniquity of the Fathers.

After this he levied an Army of ſelect Men from among the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and appointed proper Officers over them. Beſides this choſen Body which conſiſted of three hundred thouſand, he treated with the King of the *Iſraelites* for one hundred thouſand Auxiliaries, at the Rate of an hundred Talents of Silver for their Hire, paid down immediately, being fully determined to make War upon the *Amalekites*, the *Edomites*, and the *Gabilites*. As he was juſt upon the Point of marching againſt them, a Man of God adviſed him by all Means to diſmiſs the *Iſraelites*; for they were a wicked Generation, and would certainly be deſtroyed, together with thoſe that joined with them; adding moreover, that he had a ſufficient Force of his own, with God's Aſſiſtance, to overcome the Enemy.

The King having already parted with his Money, was not a little troubled at the Thought of loſing both his Pay and his Men; yet upon the Prophet's Counſel to reſign himſelf wholly to the Will of God, under whoſe Protection he ſhould be ſure to want nothing, he diſcharged his Auxiliaries, obſerving, that he frankly beſtowed that Treaſure upon them as Bounty, which they had received only as Hire.

Immediately upon parting with his Mercenaries, he advanced with his own Troops againſt the combined Enemies, whom he overcame, cut off ten thouſand of them in one Battle, and carried away ten thouſand more to the Top of a great Rock, that over-looks *Arabia*, where they were

were all throw down the Precipice and deſtroyed; *Amaziah* then returned Home with great Booty. But the *Iſraelitiſh* Mercenaries were ſo incenſed at being diſmiſſed in ſo abrupt a Manner, and without any juſt Cauſe being aſſigned, that to revenge the Contempt caſt upon them, they made an Inroad into the Territories of *Amaziah*, laying all waſte as far as *Beth-horan*, putting three thouſand People to the Sword, and carrying away a great Number of their Cattle.

Amaziah, was ſo elated by his late Victory, that regardleſs of that God by whom alone Kings reign, he degenerated from his pure Worſhip, into the abominable Idolatry of the *Amalekites*. The Prophet, upon this, went to the King, and told him, that he could not but wonder at his confiding in thoſe Powers, that were ſo far from being able to protect their Servants, that they could not defend themſelves, but were taken Priſoners by the *Hebrews*, and carried away like Slaves to *Jeruſalem*, with the Reſt of the Spoil.

Theſe Words of the Prophet highly provoked the King's Wrath, inſomuch that he forbad him, at his Peril, to interfere any further in a Buſineſs that did not concern him. The Prophet's Anſwer was, that for the future he would be quiet; but aſſured him withal, that God would take ſevere Vengeance on him for this wicked and idolatrous Innovation in Religion, which he had introduced.

But this infatuated Prince was ſo tranſported with Vanity and Inſolence upon his late Succeſs, that without any Regard to the Hand of Divine Providence, he wrote an imperious Letter ſome Time after to *Joaſh*, the King of the *Iſraelites*, commanding him and his People to pay the ſame Allegiance to him, which they had formerly rendered to his Anceſtors, *David* and *Solomon*; or, in Caſe of their Refuſal, to expect a Deciſion of the Cauſe by the Sword; to which Summons *Joaſh* returned this Anſwer.

King *Joaſh*, to King *Amaziah*. greeting,

IT happened, once upon a Time, betwixt a Cyprus Tree, and a Thiſtle, upon Mount Lebanon, *that the Thiſtle ſent to the Cyprus, ſaying, Give thy Daughtbr to my Son for Wife; whereupon a wild Beaſt went and trod down the Thiſtle.*

Make Uſe of this Example for your own Inſtruction, and moderate your own Ambition, without aſpiring to Things out of your Reach. Take Care that your Confidence and Pride, for the Overthrow of the Edomites, *do not betray you ſome Time or other to the Loſs of your Life and Kingdom.*

This Anſwer to *Amaziah* was but as Oil to the Flame, and made him ten Times more furious and implacable than before; God in his Juſtice giving him up, as may be reaſona-

bly ſuppoſed, to ſuch a Violence of Rage and Paſſion, as would certainly expoſe him to the Stroke of Divine Juſtice for his Impiety.

In this enraged Stroke of Mind he took the Field, and both Armies were drawn up in Form of Battle. But no ſooner were his Men advanced within Sight of the Enemy, than they were inſtantly ſtruck with ſuch Conſternation and Terror, that they turned their Backs without ſtriking a Blow, and flying ſeveral Ways, left *Amaziah* Priſoner in the Hands of his Enemy, who refuſed to give him Quarters upon any other Terms, than that the Citizens of *Jeruſalem* ſhould ſet open the Gates, and receive him and his victorious Army into the Town.

With theſe hard Terms the preſent Criſis obliged them to comply, having Life or Death immediately before them; ſo that *Joaſh* entered the Town in his triumphal Chariot, through a Breach of three hundred Cubits of Wall that he had cauſed to be broken down, with his Priſoner *Amaziah* marching before him; and this was the ſplendid Manner in which he took Poſſeſſion of the Place, making himſelf Maſter of the City.

He made a Seizure of all the holy Plate and Treaſure, and of all the Gold and Silver likewiſe that he could find in the Palace, carrying the whole Spoil away with him; and then diſmiſſing the King, he returned to *Samaria*. This Calamity befel *Jeruſalem* in the fourteenth Year of *Amaziah*'s Reign.

The People of *Jeruſalem*, after this, entered into a Conſpiracy againſt him, ſo that he was forced to fly for Safety to *Lachiſh*; but his Flight availed not, for the Aſſaſſins followed him thither, and murdered him upon the Spot.

His Body was carried back to *Jeruſalem*, where it was buried in Royal State. This was the miſerable End of the once victorious *Amaziah*, for the Neglect of God's Worſhip, and introducing Innovations in his holy Religion.

He died in the one-and-fiftieth Year of his Age, and twenty-ninth of his Reign, leaving his Son *Uzziah* Succeſſor to his Government.

CHAP. IV.

Jonah *prophecies againſt* Nineveh. Uzziah *begins his Reign well, but degenerates, and is puniſhed. Several ſucceſſive Kings obtain the Crown by the heinous Crime of Murder. Victorious Character of* Jotham, *King of* Judah. Nahum *foretells the Deſtruction of* Nineveh, *and the* Aſſyrian *Empire.* Jotham *dies, and is ſucceeded by* Ahaz, *an idolatrous Prince, who is vanquiſhed on his Acceſſion by his Enemies with great Slaughter.*

IN the fifteenth Year of the Reign of *Amaziah*, *Jehoram*, the Son of *Jehoaſh*, was made King over *Iſrael*, and kept his Court at *Samaria*, in the Palace of his Forefathers, for forty Years of his Reign.

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He was a Prince impious to the higheſt Degree, wholly abandoned to Idolatry; and ſo licentious, that he gratified his inordinate Deſire, in Violation of all Law, civil or religious; and the Judgments which his profligate courſe of Life brought upon the *Iſraelites*, were almoſt innumerable. It was foretold of him by *Jonah* the Prophet, that he ſhould overcome the *Syrians*, and enlarge his Territories as far as the City *Hamath* on the North, and the Lake *Aſphaltites* on the South, which were formerly the Bounds of the Land of *Canaan*, according to the Allotment of *Joſhua* the General.

Jehoram

Jeroboam was ſo elevated upon this Prediction, that he took away from the *Syrians* all the Tract of Ground before-mentioned, and annexed it to his own Dominions; and made good the Prediction of the Prophecy of *Jonah*; and the Circumſtances attending it, being ſo peculiar in their Nature, and ſo demonſtrative of the divine Power, cannot with Juſtice be omitted in this Hiſtory, and is therefore related in the following plain Manner.

The Word of the Lord came unto Jonah, *ſaying, Ariſe, and go to* Nineveh, *and there cry aloud to them, That that great Kingdom is to be ſuddenly deſtroyed; but* Jonah, *to avoid the Danger of being Author of ſuch Tidings to them, thought it better to go out of the Way (as if he could hide himſelf from God) and therefore went on board a Veſſel at* Joppa, *that was bound for* Tarſhiſh *in* Cilicia.

While they were upon the Way, there aroſe a violent Tempeſt, that put the Maſter and the Mariners, and the Pilot himſelf, into the greateſt Apprehenſion of Danger. But it was obſerved, that while the Crew were at their Prayers, and labouring to keep the Ship above Water, Jonah *was the only Man that did not exert himſelf, but lay flat upon his Face in the Hold, with his Head covered.*

The Wind and the Storm encreaſing, the Company were induced to think, that this Calamity had befallen them for the Wickedneſs of ſome of the People that they had on Board; and therefore agreed among themſelves to put it to the Lot, in order to diſcover the Man. They did ſo, and the Lot fell upon the Prophet.

This put the Crew upon enquiring what he was, and what might be his Buſineſs? He told them that he was an Iſraelite, *and a Prophet of God; adding, That he was the Man that had raiſed the Storm; and they had no Way left to ſave themſelves and the Veſſel, but by caſting him over board.*

It firſt appeared to them in ſo odious a Light, thus cruelly to deliver up a Stranger, who had put his very Life into their Hands, to certain and inevitable Deſtruction, that they durſt not reſolve upon it.

But, at laſt, partly by the extreme Neceſſity of the Caſe, (for the Ship was upon the very Point of ſinking,) partly by the Authority of the Prophet, and partly by their own Fear, they were prevailed upon, and threw

him

him into the Sea; at which Inſtant the Storm ceaſed.

The Sacred Hiſtory ſays, that he was taken up by a Whale, and after three Days, caſt up again, alive and unhurt, upon the Shore; from whence, after Pardon obtained from Almighty God for his Diſobedience, he went directly to Nineveh, *according to his Commiſſion; where, when he arrived, getting upon an Eminence, that he might be more generally heard, he foretold, that the Empire of* Aſia *was near at an End. And having publiſhed this Prophetical Declaration, he departed.*

But to return to *Jeroboam*. After a proſperous Reign of forty Years, he was buried at *Samaria*; *Zachariah* his Son ſucceeding him, as *Uzziah* ſucceeded *Amaziah* in the Fourteenth Year of *Jehoram*, to the Government of the two Tribes at *Jeruſalem*. His Mother's Name was *Jecholiah*, a Native of *Jeruſalem*.

He was a Man of great Courteſy and Juſtice; brave, provident, and induſtrious; he made War upon the *Philiſtines*, and took *Gath* and *Jabneh* from them by Aſſault, demoliſhing their Walls. He made another Expedition alſo againſt the *Arabians*, who bordered upon *Egypt*, and built a town near the *Red-ſea*, which he guarded by a ſtrong Garriſon. After this he ſubdued the *Ammonites*, and laid them under Contribution, reducing the whole Country as far as the Frontiers of *Egypt*.

He then applied himſelf to the Repairing of the Walls of the City, whether they were decayed by Age or the Neglect of former Governors; he rebuilt them, and repaired that Breach alſo, which the King of the *Iſraelites* had made, when *Amaziah* was his Priſoner, at his triumphant Entrance into the City.

He erected alſo ſeveral Towers of one hundred and fifty Cubits in Height, and built Caſtles and ſeveral ſtrong Forts for the Security of the open Country, beſide many Aqueducts, Ciſterns, and Baſons, for the Relief of his Herds and Cattle, whereof the Number was incredible, the Country being naturally diſpoſed for Paſture.

He was himſelf a great Lover of Tillage, Planting, Gardening, Nurſeries, and all Sorts of Huſbandry.

As to Military Affairs, he had an Army of three hundred and ſeventy thouſand ſelect Men, under the Command of two thouſand brave experienced Officers, all well armed, with Swords, Bucklers, Brazen Corſelets, Bows, Slings, and trained to the Exerciſe of Arms, after the moſt accurate Method of Martial Diſcipline.

He had ſeveral Machines and Engines alſo for Battery, and caſting of Stones and Darts, beſide Grappling-Hooks, and other Inſtruments of War.

But his Mind was ſo elated with the Vanity of theſe Preparations and Deſigns, that his Ambition for a tranſitory and earthly Glory diverted his Attention from Bleſſings everlaſting, and the Worſhip and Service of the Almighty; inſomuch that he deviated from his Integrity, after the Ex-

Example of his Father, from a Weakneſs of Mind, that was not able to bear up againſt the Tide of Proſperity and Succeſs.

The King, upon a ſolemn Feſtival, dreſſed himſelf in a ſacerdotal Habit, and went into the holy Temple to offer up Incenſe to the Lord upon the golden Altar; but *Azariah* the High-prieſt, with a Train of Fourſcore Prieſts with him, ruſhed into the Temple, to the King, exclaiming againſt the Wickedneſs of his Uſurpation, in breaking in upon an Office belonging peculiary to the Prieſts of the Race of *Aaron*, excluſive of all others; ſo that *Azariah* bad him immediately to depart, and not provoke the Wrath of God by thoſe Indignities any longer.

The King bad them depart, upon the Peril of their Lives; which Menace was followed with a terrible Earthquake, and the Roof of the Temple opening with the Shock of it, there paſſed a Beam of the Sun through the Cleft, that ſtruck directly upon the Face of this ſacrilegious Prince, who in that very Moment became a Leper.

When the Prieſt found the King was leprous, and that the Lord had ſmitten him, they admoniſhed him to depart the City, as an unclean Perſon, and not fit for common Society.

The ſhame of lying under ſuch a Calamity, had by this Time in ſome Meaſure humbled his Pride; ſo that he ſubmitted and obeyed; and when he had lived for ſome Time a private Life out of the City, *Jotham* his Son taking upon him the Adminiſtration of the Government, his Grief brought him at laſt to his Grave, in the ſixty-eighth Year of his Age, and in the fifty-ſecond of his Reign; his Body was laid in his Gardens in a Tomb by itſelf.

Zachariah, the King of the *Iſraelites*, and the Son of *Jeroboam* in the ſeventh Month of his Reign, was murdered by the Treachery of one of his own Domeſtics, named *Shallum*, the Son of *Jabeſh*; who, upon the Slaughter of *Zachariah*, took Poſſeſſion of the Government. It was ill got, and he loſt it as ill, on the thirtieth Day after ſeizing it.

Menahem had at that time the command of an Army that was at *Tirzah*, and upon the News of what had befallen *Zachariah*, he marched with his Troops to *Samaria*, where he fought and overthrew *Shallum*, put him to the Sword, and afterward by his own Authority took all the Enſigns of Royalty to himſelf, and exerciſed ſovereign Power. With this victorious Army he marched to *Tirzah*, but the Citizens ſhut in their Gates upon him, and refuſing to admit him, he was ſo incenſed againſt them, that he laid waſte the whole Country, and in the End took the Town by Aſſault, put all to the Sword without Regard to Age, Sex, or Condition; for he exerciſed that mercileſs Rigor upon his own Countrymen, that would have been unpardonable, even towards the worſt *Barbarians*; indeed his Government was a conſtant Scene of Horror and Confuſion for the whole ten Years of his Reign over *Iſrael*.

He was threatened, after this, with an Invaſion by *Pul*, the King of *Aſſyria*; but not daring to hazard an Engagement, he came to a timely Agreement with him, compounding for a Thouſand Talents of Silver, which he raiſed upon the People at fifty Shekels a Head.

He died ſoon after, and was buried at *Samaria*, leaving *Pekahiah*, his Son, to ſucceed him. This Prince inherited the Inhumanity and Ill-nature of his Father, as well as the Government; but his Time was ſhort, for after two Years Reign, he was cut to Pieces, together with ſeveral of his Friends, at a publick Feaſt, by the treaſonous Practice of *Pekah*, the Son of *Remaliah*, one of his Tribunes; who ſeized upon the Government, and reigned twenty Years: leaving it a Matter of Doubt, whether he was more remarkable for his Impiety to God, or his Injuſtice towards Men?

In the Days of *Pekah*, *Tiglath-Pileſer*, King of the *Aſſyrians*, invaded the *Iſraelites*; and after ſubduing the land of *Gilead*, and the Country beyond *Jordan*, together with that Part of *Galilee* that lies next it, as alſo all the Land of *Naphtali*, he took the Inhabitants Priſoners, and carried them away into his own Country.

Jotham, the Son of *Uzziah*, reigned in *Jeruſalem* over the Tribe of *Judah*, his Mother was a Native of that City, and her Name *Jeruſha*; a Prince famous for all excellent Qualities and Virtues; exemplary for his Reverence to God, for his Juſtice to Men, and for the Care he took of the Common-wealth; making it his Buſineſs to keep all Things in order, and to rectify what he found amiſs. He repaired the Porches and Galleries in the Temple; made good the City Walls, where they were falling to Ruin; erected large and ſtrong Towers; brought the *Ammonites* under the Contribution of a hundred Talents a Year, ten thouſand Meaſures of Wheat, and as many of Barley, advancing the Kingdom alſo to ſuch a State, that the People were both happy at Home, and formidable Abroad.

In the Reign of this Prince, there appeared a Prophet, whoſe Name was *Nahum*; and he foretold the Deſtruction of *Nineveh*, and the Subverſion of the *Aſſyrian* Empire, in the following Manner. *The Condition of* Nineveh, *ſhall be like that of a Fiſh-pool, in a violent Agitation of the Waters before a great Wind. The People ſhall fly away before the Storm, in Trouble and Confuſion; calling out one to another, ſtay and take your Gold and your Silver with you, and no Body ſhall mind it; for their Lives ſhall be much dearer to them than their Treaſure.*

They ſhall have deſperate Factions and Diviſions among themſelves; weeping and wailing, with the Knocking of their Knees, and Death in their Faces. What will become of the Habitation of the Lions and the Dams of the Lions Whelps?

Nineveh, *ſays the Lord I will ſtrike thee out from off the Face of the Earth, and put an End to the Outrages*

rages of the wild Beasts, that thou hast sent into the World.

This is the Sum and Substance of the Prophet's Predictions concerning *Nineveh*, which were punctually fulfilled at the Expiration of about an hundred and fifteen Years.

Jotham departed this Life in the forty first Year, and the sixteenth of his Reign; and *Ahaz* in the Course of hereditary Right succeeded him.

He was the most impious Prince that ever sat upon that Throne, both for his Deviation from the Laws of his Country, and his Idolatry, in Imitation of the Kings of *Israel*.

He built Altars in *Jerusalem*; sacrificed to Idols upon them, and his own Son among the rest for a Burnt-offering, after the Manner of the *Canaanites*, and committed many Offences as enormous as these.

While *Ahaz* persisted in these wicked Courses, *Rezin* the King of *Damascus*, and *Pekah* the King of the *Israelites*, being joined in a League, marched together, with their united Forces, and invested that famous City of *Jerusalem*. But the Place was so well fortified, that they were forced to raise the Siege, and quit it.

In the mean Time, while the King of *Syria* possessed himself of the City of *Elath* by the Red-Sea, put all the Inhabitants to the Sword, and introduced a Colony of *Syrians* into their Places.

He possessed himself after this of several Castles and Strong Holds; did terrible Execution upon the Jews, and so, with a prodigious Booty, marched his Army back again to *Damascus*.

When the King of *Jerusalem* came to understand that the *Syrians* were departed, he thought himself able to cope with the King of *Israel*, and drew out an Army against him; but his Wickedness was so great, that God in just Indignation gave the Victory to his Enemy, with the Loss of an 100 and 20 thousand of his Men.

In the same Battle, *Zichri*, the General of the *Israelites*, killed *Maaseiah*, the Son of *Ahaz*, in a single Encounter, and slew also *Azrikam* the Captain of the Guards; taking *Elkanah*, the General of the Jewish Troops, Prisoner; beside an infinite Number of Captives of the *Benjamites*, whom they carried away together with the Spoil to *Samaria*.

There was at that Time a Prophet in *Samaria*, whose Name was *Oded*, who went out of the Town to meet the Army in their Return, crying out to them with a loud Voice, that they were not to look upon this Victory as gained by their own Virtue and Valour, but as a Judgment from Heaven upon King *Ahaz*. The Prophet therefore told them, they were to blame not to rest satisfied with the Success of their Undertaking, without making Slaves of their Kindred and Relations of the two Tribes; advising them by all Means to set them at Liberty, and send them Home again, without offering any Indignity to their Persons, upon the Peril of falling under God's Displeasure.

The *Israelites* upon this Occasion called

called a Council to deliberate on the beſt Meaſures that could be purſued, in Conſequence of the Prophet's Warning, when *Berechiah*, a Man of great Authority in the Aſſembly, with three more, declared themſelves utterly againſt the bringing any of the Priſoners into the Town, for fear God's Vengeance ſhould fall upon all the Reſt. Adding moreover, that they already had many heinous Tranſgreſſions alledged againſt them, and therefore needed not to aggravate the Charge.

The Soldiers were ſo far wrought upon by this Conſideration, that they gave their Priſoners Liberty to go whither they would, and take what they would with them; whereupon four Perſons were appointed to ſet them free, take Care of their Perſons, furniſh them with Proviſions for their Journey, and bear them Company beyond *Jericho*. When they had brought them on their Way within a little of *Jeruſalem*, they returned to *Samaria*.

CHAP. V.

Cruelty and Impiety of Ahaz, *who dies, and is ſucceeded by his Son* Hezakiah. *Reſtoration of the true Worſhip, and Defeat of the* Philiſtines. Samaria *taken by Aſſault. Idolatry puniſhed by a dreadful Peſtilence. A new Colony is planted in* Samaria.

THE fatal Overthrow *Ahaz* ſuſtained from the *Iſraelites*, obliged him to call in the Aid of Foreign Powers. Accordingly he ſent an Ambaſſy to *Tiglath-Pileſer*, the King of the *Aſſyrians*, with Promiſes of great Sums of Money, and magnificent Preſents, deſiring Succours from him againſt the *Iſraelites*, and thoſe of *Syria* and *Damaſcus*.

This Prince no ſooner heard the Deſire and Propoſal of *Ahaz*, than he marched directly to his Aid, laying the Country of *Syria* waſte, taking *Damaſcus* by Aſſault, and putting King *Rezin* to the Sword.

The People of *Damaſcus* he tranſplanted to the *Upper Media*, and ſupplied their Places at *Damaſcus*, with Colonies of his own People. He then depopulated great Part of the Land of *Iſrael*, carrying away vaſt Numbers of them Priſoners.

Having thus haraſſed the *Syrians*, *Iſraelites* *Ahaz* took all the Gold and Silver out of the King's Treaſury, and that likewiſe out of the Temple, with all the rich Donations, and carried the whole along with him to *Damaſcus*; where, according to his Agreement, he delivered up to the King of *Aſſyria*, with Acknowledgments for the Favour of his Relief, and then returned to *Jeruſalem*.

Now this King had ſo little Senſe, either of Honour or Reaſon, that the mortal Enmity between him and the *Syrians*, did not hinder him from worſhipping their Gods, and joining in their Ceremonies; vainly perſuaded himſelf, from his blind Zeal in idolatrous Worſhip, that they would be propitious to his Arms; and then, when he was overcome, on the other hand,

had, his Buſineſs was to make Friends of the Gods of the *Aſſyrians*; indeed he was prone to fall into every idolatrous Abomination by the Neglect of the Worſhip of the true God, and in Oppoſition to the Profeſſion and Practice of his Anceſtors.

This Apoſtaſy drew down the Wrath and Vengeance of God upon him. Nay, the Contempt and Averſion that he had for the Honour and Service of God, was ſo extravagant, that after he had rifled the Temple, he commanded the very Doors to be kept ſhut, out of Enmity to God and Goodneſs, and to prevent the celebrating of any Act of religious Worſhip in that holy Place.

But at laſt, after a conſtant Courſe of Impiety, he departed this Life at thirty-ſix Years of Age, and in the ſixteenth of his Reign, leaving his Son *Hezekiah* his Succeſſor to the Government. About this Time *Pekah* King of *Iſrael* loſt both his Government and his Life by the Treachery of a Court-Confident, called *Hoſhea*, who enjoyed the Fruit of his Violence and Uſurpation, for the Space of nine Years.

He was one of the worſt of Men; that in his Life and Converſation ſhewed not the leaſt Thought or Belief of a God. *Shalmaneſer*, the King of the *Aſſyrians*, led an Army againſt him, and being caſt off by God, whom he himſelf had rejected and deſpiſed, he was eaſily overcome, and forced to ſubmit to the Terms of a Tributary.

In the 3d Year of *Hoſhea*'s Reign, *Hezekiah* came to be King of *Jeruſalem*. He was a Perſon endowed with an excellent Underſtanding, and a Lover and Practiſer of Piety and Juſtice; the firſt Thing he did upon his coming to the Throne, was to provide for the Comfort of his People, in introducing the Religion of the only true God; to this End, he immediately ſummon'd a Meeting of the Prieſts and *Levites*, and addreſſed them to this Effect: *I need not remind you of the many and great Calamities that have befallen you for the Iniquities of my Father, in not rendering to God the Honour due to him, and for the Madneſs of your being prevailed upon to pay a divine Adoration to his Idols; wherefore being now taught by woful Experience, how dangerous a Thing it is to prevaricate with the Almighty, it is my Advice, that all paſt Miſcarriages may be forgotten, and that you purify and purge yourſelves, together with the Prieſts and Levites, from all your former Pollutions; and after that Preparation, that you ſet open the Doors of that holy Place; and when you ſhall have reſtored it to its original Purity, by Conſecrations, expiatory Luſtrations, and Sacrifices in Form, we may then promiſe ourſelves that God will pardon our Impieties, and proſper us in all our Undertakings.*

The Prieſts were ſo encouraged by this Advice of the King, that they preſently opened the Temple, cleared it of all Impurities, made ready there holy Veſſels, and laid their Sacrifices upon the Altar, according to the *Jewiſh* Manner.

The King, in the mean Time, ſent Meſſengers throughout all his

Dominions to ſummon the People up to *Jeruſalem* to the Feaſt of unleavened Bread; which had been then a long Time intermitted, through the impious Neglect of former Kings; exhorting and inviting the *Iſraelites* alſo to forſake the Practice of their idolatrous Superſtitions, and return to the Exerciſe of the true Religion, and to the Worſhip of the true God; promiſing them that they ſhould have Liberty to come and go, and to celebrate this Feſtival in common with his own People.

The King obſerved, that it was not for his own Sake, but for theirs, that he gave them this Invitation; and that they themſelves ſhould reap the Benefit, if they followed his Counſel.

But when the *Iſraelites* heard the Meſſage, they were ſo far from giving any Heed to it, that they held the Meſſengers in Deriſion, and treated the Prophet contemptibly, for the good Office of adviſing them to return to their Duty, and foretelling them the Miſeries that ſhould befal them, without a timely Repentance. Thus they proceeded from one Wickedneſs to another, till God in his Wrath avenged himſelf upon them for their Impiety, by delivering them up into the Hands of their Enemies. But there were great Numbers yet of the Tribes of *Manaſſeh*, *Zebulon*, and *Iſſachar*, whoſe Hearts were touched with this Advice of the Prophet's, and who went up to *Hezekiah* at *Jeruſalem*, to worſhip.

When the Multitude was aſſembled there, the King went up to the Temple, together with the Princes and the People, where he ſacrificed for himſelf ſeven Bulls, ſeven Rams, and as many Goats; and when he had firſt laid his Hands upon the Heads of the Victims, both the King and the Princes left the Execution to the Prieſts, who cut the Throats of the Sacrifices, and burnt them whole, the *Levites* ſtanding in a Ring about them, ſinging Hymns, and accompanying their Voices with muſical Inſtruments, as *David* had preſcribed them of old, the reſt of the Prieſts joining in the Concert.

When this was over, the King and the People caſt themſelves proſtrate, and worſhipped the Lord.

Hezekiah ſacrificed after this, ſeventy Bullocks, a hundred Rams, and two hundred Lambs; beſtowing alſo ſix hundred Bullocks, and three thouſand other Cattle, as a Bounty for the Entertainment of the People; and when the Prieſts had performed their Office, according to the cuſtomary Method, the King himſelf feaſted with the People, and joined with them in Praiſes and Thankſgivings.

The Feaſt of unleavened Bread was now coming on, and in the Time of their Preparations for the Feaſt of the Paſſover, they offered up a Courſe of other Sacrifices, for ſeven Days ſucceſſively, and the King beſtowed upon the People, out of his own Bounty, two thouſand Bulls, and ſeven thouſand of other Cattle, over and above their own Number. The Princes likewiſe, after *Hezekiah*'s Example, ſuper-adding a thouſand Bulls,

Bulls, and a thouſand and forty other Beaſts; inſomuch, that from the Days of *Solomon* down to that Time, there was never ſuch a Solemnity known to be ſo ſplendidly celebrated.

As ſoon as this Feſtival was over, they made it their next Work to purge the whole Country, having firſt purified *Jeruſalem* itſelf from the Abomination of their Idols.

The King then appointed Daily Sacrifices, according to the Law, to be ſupplied out of his own Stores, and commanded the People to preſent the Prieſts and Levites with their Tenths and Firſt-Fruits, that they might not be taken off by any common Buſineſs from their Attendance upon the Altar.

By this Means they were abundantly furniſhed with all Sorts of Fruits and Proviſions. The King alſo ordered the building of Granaries and Store-houſes, for the common Uſe and Service of themſelves, their Wives, and Children, to be diſtributed in Proportion to their Shares; ſo that by theſe Degrees, the antient Diſcipline came in ſome Meaſure to be reſtored.

Having thus revived the Worſhip of God, and extirpated Idolatry throughout his Dominions, the King made War upon the *Philiſtines*, and overran their Country, ſubduing all their Cities, from *Gath* to *Gaza*, which he added to his Territories.

When the King of *Aſſyria* ſent a Meſſage to him to demand the Tribute from him, which was formerly paid him by his Father, with a Menace, in Caſe of Refuſal, to take his Country from him; *Hezekiah*, depending upon the Goodneſs of God, the Conſciouſneſs of his Integrity, and the Veracity of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, from whom he was ſure to be forewarned of the Event of Things, that he gave no Heed to the Menaces of the *Aſſyrians*.

Upon Intelligence being given to *Shalmaneſer*, King of *Aſſyria*, that the King of *Iſrael* was entered into a ſecret Treaty with *So*, King of *Egypt*, to join in an Alliance againſt him, the *Aſſyrian*, in a furious Indignation, immediately marched with his Army againſt *Samaria*.

In the third Year of the Siege, and in the ninth of the Reign of that King, he took it by Aſſault, in the ſeventh Year of the Reign of *Hezekiah* King of *Jeruſalem*.

The Loſs of this Place was the final Ruin of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*; the People were all tranſplanted into *Media* and *Perſia*, and *Hoſhea* the King taken with them alive; while the King of *Aſſyria* brought others from thence in Exchange, as far as *Cuthah*, a River of *Perſia*, to repeople the Land of the *Iſraelites* and plant them in *Samaria*.

This Tranſportation of the ten Tribes from the Place of their Abode, fell out nine hundred and forty ſeven Years, from the coming of their Forefathers out of the Land of *Egypt*, to their taking Poſſeſſion of that Land before, by Force of Arms; eight hundred Years from the Days of *Joſhua*, and two hundred and forty Years, ſeven Months, and ſeven Days, 947

Days, after the Revolt from *Rehoboam*, the Grandſon of *David*, to *Jeroboam*.

This was the miſerable End of that ſtiff-necked People, that would neither be ſubject to Laws, nor hearken to the Voice and Precautions of their Prophets, though they foretold them, that their certain Deſtruction was at hand, unleſs they departed from their evil Ways.

Theſe Calamities aroſe from that ſeditious Revolt from *Rehoboam*, in advancing a Servant over the Head of his Maſter; who, in contempt of God, and his holy Laws, drew the Indignation of Heaven upon the People, by drawing them to the Practice of the ſame Abominations, by his Example; but he eſcaped not the juſt Judgment of God.

The King of *Aſſyria* carried all before him, and extended his victorious Arms throughout *Syria* and *Phœnicia**.

The New-comers in *Samaria* were called *Cuthites*, from a Country of *Perſia* of that Name and from the River *Cuthah*, from whence they had their Original. There were five Nations of them, and they brought as many of their own Country Gods with them, highly provoking the true and great God againſt them, for the Worſhip they paid to the Idols; ſo that they were viſited with ſo dreadful a Plague, that the Place was almoſt depopulated.

Having uſed divers Means to avert this dreadful Judgment, they were at length adviſed by the Oracle to have recourſe to the Worſhip of the great God, as the only Means of finding Relief for their Calamity.

The People immediately upon this ſent for Commiſſioners to attend the King of *Aſſyria* with a Petition, that he would be pleaſed to ſend them ſome of the Prieſts that were carried away Captives with the *Iſraelites*.

This being granted as they deſired, they had the Law of *Moſes* read, with an Explication upon the Practice,

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* There is mention made of his Name in the Hiſtory of the *Tyrians*; for in the Reign of *Elalæus*, as *Menander* has it in his Annals, (that were tranſlated out of the *Tyrian* Language into *Greek*,) he made War upon *Tyre*. His Words are to this Purpoſe:

"This ſame *Elulæus* reigned thirty ſix Years, and upon a Revolt of the *Gittæans*, he ſent a Fleet thither, that reduced them to his Obedience; and the King of the *Aſſyrians* ſent out an Army alſo againſt him, and invaded the whole Country of *Phœnicia*; till upon the Concluſion of a Peace, he marched with his Troops back again.

"Some ſhort Time after this Exploit, the Cities of *Sydon*, *Arce*, *Palæ-Tyrus*, and ſeveral other Towns, went over from the *Tyrians*, to the *Aſſyrian* King; who taking it ſo heinouſly to ſee the *Tyrians* the only People that diſputed his Authority and Power, he diſpatched a Navy againſt them of ſixty Sail, and eight hundred Rowers, under the Conduct of the *Phœnicians*, which the *Tyrians* encountered, with only twelve Veſſels; broke the whole Body, and took five hundred of the Rowers Priſoners.

"The Succeſs of this Encounter gave them a wonderful Reputation for their Skill and Ability in Naval Affairs.

"The King of *Aſſyria*, upon this Affront, returns, and ſets Guards along the River, and upon all Springs and Aqueducts, to keep the *Tyrians* from Water. The *Tyrians* laboured under this Diſtreſs for a Matter of five Years, when they were forced to relieve themſelves from Pits of their own digging."

and

and the Reaſon of their Religion and Diſcipline, which had ſo wonderful an Effect upon them, that they gave themſelves wholly up to the Study and exerciſe of it; and ſoon after this the Peſtilence ceaſed*.

CHAP. VI.

Sennacherib *King of* Aſſyria *makes War upon* Hezekiah; *receives Conditions from him to withdraw his Army. Breaks his Articles.* Hezekiah *is diſtreſſed. Applies to the Prophet* Iſaiah, *who promiſes him Relief. Blaſphemy of* Sennacherib. *Prayer of* Hezekiah. *He receives a Meſſage of his Death, obtains a Reprieve by a Signal from Heaven, and afterwards pays the Debt of Nature.*

IN the fourteenth Year of *Hezekiah* King of the two Tribes, *Sennacherib* the King of *Aſſyria* marched againſt him, with a powerful and well-diſciplined Army.

Having taken all the Cities of *Judah* and *Benjamin* by Aſſault, he was now ready to advance toward *Jeruſalem*, when an Embaſſy came to him with an Offer of Submiſſion and paying him Tribute.

Sennacherib gave the Embaſſadors Audience, reſolved immediately to deſiſt from the War, and to treat upon the King's Terms, promiſing upon Oath, that upon the Receipt of three hundred Talents of Silver, and thirty of Gold, he would depart with his Army, without attempting any Act of Hoſtility.

Hezekiah upon this Aſſurance, emptied all the Treaſuries, and ſent him the Money, in Confidence of the Enemy's Departure, according to his Oath, and that he might reign afterward without any Difficulty or Danger.

The *Aſſyrian* took the Money, but broke his Word; for he marched himſelf with his Troops againſt the *Egyptians* and *Ethiopians*, and left *Rabſhakeh* Lieutenant-general, with *Tartan*, and *Rabſaris*, to carry on the War againſt *Jeruſalem*.

Upon the drawing up of the Army, they pitched their Camp within Sight of the Walls of the Town; and by a Meſſenger, ſummoned *Hezekiah* out to a Parley.

Hezekiah was not willing to truſt himſelf out; and therefore ſent three of his particular Friends to ſupply his Place; *Eliakim*, his Deputy Governor; *Shebnah* and *Joah*, Keepers of the Records.

* The People of that Country retained long ſince the Name of *Cuthites*, among the *Hebrews*; but the *Greeks* call them *Samaritans*.

They were a People unfixed and changeable in their Opinions and Inclinations, accommodating themſelves to the preſent Time and Occaſion.

So long as the *Jews* were proſperous, we are all of a Blood they cryed, and of the Lineage of *Joſeph*; but if they happened to fall under any Affliction, or Adverſity, alas! ſaid they, we have nothing to do with them, they are Strangers to us; we came a great Way of.

Upon their coming out of the Town, and preſenting themſelves before the Officers of the *Aſſyrian* Army, *Rabſhakeh*, with an imperious Tone, bad them carry their Maſter this Meſſage; *That the great King* Sennacherib *would fain know what Confidence he valued himſelf upon, that he ſhould dare to make any great Difficulty of owning that great King for his Maſter, and refuſe Entrance to his Army into the City? Does he flatter himſelf with Hope of Relief from* Egypt, *as if they were in a Condition to cope with the Army of my Maſter? It is the Height of Frenzy to imagine it, and thereby truſt for Succeſs to that which will prove inevitably his very Bane and Ruin.*

You ſhould inform your Maſter, that this Expedition is not attempted without God's holy Will and Direction, who will as certainly give the King of Aſſyria *Victory over* Hezekiah, *and his Subjects, as he hath given him Victory over the* Iſraelites.

Rabſhakeh delivered himſelf in *Hebrew*, being a Language he was verſed in. But *Eliakim* fearing the Effect ſuch a Diſcourſe in a known Tongue might have upon the Multitude, deſired him rather to ſpeak *Syriac*. *Rabſhakeh* underſtanding the Cauſe of *Eliakim*'s Fear, raiſed his Voice, and continued his Diſcourſe in *Hebrew* to this Purpoſe.

Let your People hear, and underſtand the Commands of my Maſter; for it concerns them ſo to do, and to render themſelves ſubſervient.

It is the Buſineſs, I know, both of yourſelves and of your King, to ſeduce your People with vain and empty Hopes of defending themſelves by Force; but if you have Courage to put it to a Hazard, or any Sort of Pretence to beat off this Army from your Walls, I am ready to furniſh you with two thouſand Horſe, if you will undertake to find Riders.

But, alas! you have no Riders wherewithal to try the Experiment. If it be ſo, why are you then ſo long deliberating upon a Thing you will be compelled to do in the Concluſion? eſpecially in a Caſe where you are ſafe, if you do it willingly, and run the moſt imminent Hazard in, if you ſtay till compelled; as the Weaker muſt of Neceſſity yield at laſt to the Stronger.

This was ſpoke in the Hearing, as well of the People as of the Deputies; and no ſooner brought to the King's Ear, than he diveſted himſelf of his Royal Robes, and put on Sackcloth, after the Cuſtom of the Country, in Token of his Humiliation, caſting himſelf proſtrate upon the Ground, and imploring the Aid and Favour of Almighty God, being perſuaded that he could derive Relief from no other Source, than the Divine Protection.

He ſent likewiſe ſome of his particular Friends, together with others of the Prieſthood, to the Prophet *Iſaiah*, deſiring that he would intercede with the Lord, by Prayers and Sacrifices, for the common Safety, and for the Interpoſition of Providence in behalf of his People.

The Prophet complied with the King's Requeſt, and ſucceeded ſo far in his Mediation, that he was authoriſed

thoriſed by a Divine Revelation to bid the King and his Friends be of good Courage; for the Enemy ſhould be overcome without a Battle, and abandon his Deſign with Loſs and Diſgrace; that his Pride ſhould be humbled, and that the Hand of the Almighty ſhould be upon him to his Ruin; that *Sennacherib* himſelf ſhould miſcary in his *Egyptian* Expedition, and upon that Diſappointment return Home, where he ſhould fall by the Sword.

Immediately after theſe encouraging Declarations of the Prophet, *Hezekiah* received Letters from the King of *Aſſyria*, with inſolent Expoſtulations on his Folly and Preſumption, in thinking himſelf capable of maintaining his Liberty againſt the Power of a Prince who had already ſubjected ſo many Warlike Nations to his Obedience, concluding with a Menace, of putting Man, Woman and Child to the Sword, if they did not without Delay, ſet open their City Gates, and give a free Entrance to his Army*.

Hezekiah relying upon the Truth of the Divine Word, and the Power of an Almighty Arm, paid no Regard to the Threats of his Enemy; but betook himſelf to Prayer and Supplication for the Protection of the City, till the Prophet *Iſaiah* returned with this Anſwer: *That his Petition was heard, and that the Danger was over, for any Harm the* Aſſyrians *ſhould do them upon that Undertaking. He told them likewiſe, that there were happier times at Hand, wherein they ſhould live in Peace and Security upon their own Lands and Poſſeſſions, without Fear of an Enemy.* In Proceſs of Time the King of *Aſſyria* finding all his Attempts fruſtrated, and that nothing ſucceeded with him, withdrew his Army, and went back again to *Nineveh.*

He had ſpent much Time before *Peluſium*; and at laſt, when he had brought up his Platforms within a little of the Top of the Walls, and was upon the very Point of giving the Aſſault, News was brought him, that *Tirhakah*, King of *Ethiopia*, was upon his March, and approaching with a great Enforcement to aſſiſt the *Egyptians*; and that he took his Route through the Deſart, with a Deſign to fall upon the *Aſſyrians* by Surprize. *Sennacherib*, was ſo alarmed at this Report, that he immediately drew off his Army.

Sennacherib, at his Return from the *Egyptian* War, found his Army that he had left under the Command of *Rabſhakeh* almoſt deſtroyed by a judicial

* *Herodotus* calls this War of *Sennacherib* againſt the King of *Egypt*, a War againſt the Prieſt of *Vulcan*, as being both a King, and a Prieſt of that falſe God. "And aſſigns as the Cauſe of *Sennacherib*'s raiſing the Siege of *Peluſium*, that the King of *Egypt*, upon this Occaſion, called to his God for Help; which being granted him, was fatal to the *Arabian*, by a Miſtake, writing *Arabian* for *Aſſyrian*; and alſo that in one Night there came ſuch Troops of Rats into the Camp of the *Aſſyrians*, that they gnawed all their Bow-ſtrings to Pieces, and made uſeleſs ſeveral other Pieces of their Arms, even to the diſarming of the *Aſſyrians*, who, upon this Diſappointment, drew off from the Town.

Peſti-

Peſtilence, which ſwept away, in general, Officers, Tribunes, and common Soldiers, to the Number of one hundred eighty five thouſand Men, the firſt Night they ſat down before the City.

This dreadful Mortality ſo alarmed the King of *Aſſyria*, as an awful Stroke of Divine Vengeance, that, leſt the remaining Part of his Army ſhould undergo the ſame Calamity; he retired with the utmoſt Precipitation to his Palace of *Nineveh*, where, after a while, he was cut off by his two eldeſt Sons, *Adrammelech* and *Sharezer*, in the very Temple of *Niſroch*, his darling Idol. The People of the Country, deteſting the Inhumanity of the Action, baniſhed them out of their Dominions, whereupon they fled into *Armenia*, *Eſarhaddon*, the third Son, ſucceeding to the Government: Thus ended this mighty Expedition.

Hezekiah being now delivered beyond all Expectation from any farther Apprehenſion of Trouble or Danger, and likewiſe thoroughly convinced that it was the immediate Hand of God that wrought his Preſervation, as well by the Plague that deſtroyed one Part of the *Aſſyrian* Army, as by the Terror of that Judgment that diſmayed the reſt; he, together with the People, offered up Praiſes and Thankſgivings for the Mercies received; he was ſeized with ſo dangerous a Diſtemper, that his Phyſicians, and the reſt of his Friends, deſpaired of his Life.

In this Diſtreſs, nothing ſo ſenſibly afflicted the King, as the Conſideration, that his dying without Iſſue, the Succeſſion of the Family would be at an End, and the Kingdom abſolutely left without a legitimate Heir.

The Anxiety ariſing from this Circumſtance ſo affected the pious King, that he addreſſed himſelf to God with Supplications and *(a)* Tears for the prolonging of his Life, till he might have a Succeſſor out of his Loins, and not to take him out of the Number of the Living, till he might be the Father of a Son, to preſerve his Memory to ſucceeding Times.

God took Compaſſion of him, and the rather, becauſe he was not ſo much troubled for being deprived of

(a) Tears. The Love of Life is natural to us, and the Fear of Death is ſo ſtrongly implanted in our very Frame and Conſtitution, that it requires no ſmall Share of Fortitude to receive the Sentence of our Diſſolution with a proper Serenity and Compoſure of Mind: Human Infirmity there was a ſufficient Apology for *Hezekiah*'s Behaviour; but there is ſomewhat more to be alledged in his Behalf.

He ſaw in himſelf the royal Family of *David* extinct (he being as yet childleſs) and conſequently all Hopes of the Meſſiah's being born of his Race were become abortive.

He ſaw the impending Storm that threatened his Country with Ruin and Deſolation, and that as there was none of his Family to ſucceed him in the Throne, all Things were in Danger of running into Anarchy and Confuſion.

Having this diſmal Proſpect therefore before his Eyes, he might well melt into Tears at the Apprehenſion of his approaching Death, which would extinguiſh all his Hopes, and conſummate all his Fears, in making him go down childleſs to the Grave.

his

his King dom by Death, or for the Want of a Succeſſor in his own Line of Deſcent.

Upon this, the Prophet *Iſaiah* was ſent to him, with the comfortable Aſſurance, that in three Days his Diſeaſe ſhould leave him, that he ſhould live fifteen Years longer, and that the Kingdom ſhould deſcend at laſt to his own Son and Heir.

When the Prophet had delivered this Meſſage to the King, according to his Order, the Diſeaſe was ſo deſperate, and the News ſo ſurprizing, that *Hezekiah* could not perſuade himſelf into a Belief of it, without ſome Prodigy from *Iſaiah*, in Confirmation of his Authority and Commiſſion*.

The Prophet aſked him what Sign or Token would give him Satisfaction? ſo he propounded, that the Shadow upon his Dial might go *(b)* ten Degrees backward from the Place where it then ſtood.

The King finding this Miracle wrought upon the Prayers of the Prophet, was reſtored to Health, and went immediately up to the Temple, to return unfeigned Thanks to his gracious Deliverer.

About this Time *Berodach-baladan*, the Son of *Baladan* King of *Babylon*, having ſent Ambaſſadors with Preſents to *Hezekiah*, invited him into a League of Amity and Alliance.

Hezekiah received them with great Courteſy; entertained them ſumptuouſly, ſhewed them his Treaſure and his Armoury, and whatever elſe he had that was magnificent and valuable, either in Gold or precious Stones, and ſent them back with rich Preſents to their Maſter.

Upon this *Iſaiah* came to him, and aſked him who thoſe Men were, and whence they came? He told the Prophet, that they were ſent from the King of *Babylon*, and that he had ſhewed them all the Riches and Curioſities of his Palace, that they might gather from thence, how great a Prince he was, and thereby poſſeſs the King with a juſt Apprehenſion of his Power and Importance.

The Prophet by Way of Reproof thus addreſſed him, *Know then, that it will not be long before this Treaſure of*

* It was uſual in thoſe Days to require at the Hands of the Prophets ſome extraordinary Evidence of the Truth of their Predictions.

(b) Ten Degrees backward. Scarce any Paſſage in the Old Teſtament has been more tortured by licentious Critics than this; the general Objection againſt the Reality of the Miracle, being the great Danger of ſhocking or unhinging the whole Frame of Nature, by ſo retrogade a Motion; but ſurely it is ſufficient to ſilence this Cavil to obſerve, that this was a Miracle wrought by the immediate Appointment of God himſelf, and that though it affected the whole Frame of Nature, yet no reaſonable Man can deny, that the ſame omnipotent Hand that called theſe ſtupendous Globes into Being at firſt, and aſſigned to each its peculiar Motion, can, whenever he, in his infinite Wiſdom ſees fit, either change, accelerate, or retard ſuch Motion, to anſwer the wiſe Purpoſes of his Providence, and at the ſame Time ſuperſede the Effect which ſuch Alteration would otherwiſe have upon this viſible Syſtem.

Beroſus

yours ſhall be carried to Babylon; *ſeveral of your Poſterity ſhall be degraded, and ſerve the Court of* Babylon *in the Quality of Eunuchs. This you will find to be a Truth; for God himſelf hath foretold it.*

This Prediction pierced the very Soul of *Hezekiah*, and extorted from him this Declaration.

*Though I cannot but be much troubled at the Thought of the Miſery that attends my Family, yet ſince it is God's Pleaſure, I have no more to beg from Heaven, than that I may enjoy the ſmall Remainder of my miſerable Life in Peace**.

Hezekiah, according to his humble Requeſt, lived during the Reſidue of his Reign in Peace, and died in the four and fiftieth Year of his Life, and the nine and twentieth of his Reign.

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* *Beroſus* takes Notice of this *Baladan*, King of *Babylon*; but the Prophet *Iſaiah*, who was ſo infalliby and miraculouſly inſpired in all he ſaid, and ſo certain of the Truth of his Predictions, committed all his Prophecies to writing, and left them to Poſterity, for all Men to judge of what he foretold, by the Event; and this was not his Buſineſs alone, but there were twelve more that did the ſame; and all Caſes of Event whatſoever, Good or Evil, the Accompliſhment and the Prophecy agree exactly together.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

Hezekiah *is ſucceeded by* Manaſſeh, *whoſe Country is ravaged by the King of* Babylon, *for his Wickedneſs. He is taken Priſoner, but upon his Repentance ſet at Liberty. His Son* Amon *is ſoon cut off, and ſucceeded by* Joſiah, *a Prince of exemplary Piety. Inſtance of his Zeal for the true Worſhip of God. His Death by an extraordinary Incident. Is ſucceeded by an impious Son, who is depoſed by the King of* Egypt, *and dies in Exile.*

MANASSEH, the Son of *Hezekiah* by *Hephzibah*, a Native of *Jeruſalem*, ſucceeded his Father in the Government, but deviated from his pious Examples in every Inſtance that was practicable, committing all thoſe Abominations that in former Reigns had brought ſuch Judgment on the *Iſraelites*.

He was ſo daring a Libertine, as to prophane the Holy Temple itſelf, and conſequently the whole City, and every Part of his Dominions, with his deteſtable Idolatries. He began his Reign with a Contempt of God, and proceeded to a barbarous and bloody Perſecution of holy and good Men, dipping his Hands in the Blood of the very Prophets themſelves; inſomuch, that hardly a Day paſſed without putting ſome of them to Death, ſo that the very Streets of *Jeruſalem* ran down with Blood. The Cry of theſe impious, and inhuman Outrages called ſo loudly to Heaven for Vengeance, that God was highly incenſed at his daring Impiety, ſent ſundry Prophets, one after another, both to the King and to the People, with Cautions to them to repent in Time of their Neglect of God's Worſhip, and to return to their Duty, upon

upon the Peril of ſuffering the ſame Calamities for the ſame Sins that had been inflicted upon their Brethren the *Iſraelites* before them.

But they regarded not the Voice of God by his Servants; till they found their Intention and Negligencies followed with moſt awful Tokens of the Divine Wrath; for upon their impiouſly perſiſting in their Diſbelief and Contempt of the Divine Word, God ſtirred up the King of *Babylon* and *Chaldea* to make War upon them; who ſent an Army into *Judea*, that over-ran and deſtroyed the whole Country; ſurpriſed *Manaſſeh*, and carried him away Priſoner.

This miſerable Prince was now by woful Experience rendered ſenſible of his Fault, and upon that Reflection earneſtly beſought God, ſo far to ſoften the Hearts of his Enemies, as might move them to treat him with ſome Degree of Tenderneſs and Humanity. God was not inexorable, but in Pity gave Ear to his Supplication; ſo that the King of *Babylon*, after ſome Time, gave *Manaſſeh* his Liberty, and reſtored him to his former Government.

Upon this Arrival at *Jeruſalem*, by the Permiſſion and Clemency of the Conqueror, he made all poſſible Efforts to atone for his former Miſcarriages, evincing the Principles and Practices of a new Man, and becoming, from the moſt impious Prophaner of ſacred Things, a moſt zealous Promoter of true Religion; for he purged the City, and conſecrated the Temple afreſh, making it his whole Buſineſs to expreſs his Gratitude and Reverence toward God, and to preſerve to himſelf his Bleſſing and Favour all the Days of his Life. He took Care, both by Example and Authority, to inſtruct the People in their Duties, being conſcious to himſelf, that his former Mal-Adminiſtration contributed not a little to the Misfortunes of the Public. He cauſed an Altar to be erected after the Preſcription and Appointment of *Moſes*, and offered daily Sacrifices upon it.

When he had reſtored Religion, and the Diſcipline of it, to its original State and Purity, he made it his Buſineſs to fortify *Jeruſalem*; repairing the old Walls, and encompaſſing them with new ones. He built ſeveral high and ſtrong Towers, and furniſhed all the Out-works with Proviſions of all Sorts. His Converſion to God was attended with ſuch auſpicious Circumſtances, that from the firſt Date of it, to the Day of his Death, he was looked upon to be one of the happieſt of Princes. He died in the ſixty-ſeventh Year of his Age, in the five and fiftieth of his Reign, and was buried in his own Garden. His Son *Amon* ſucceeded him in the Government.

This Prince following the looſe Example of his Father's Youth, and practiſing the ſame Abominations, was quickly called to an Account for his Miſcarriages, by ſome of his familiar Friends and Domeſtics, who cut him off in the four and twentieth Year of his Life, and the ſecond of his Reign. The People brought the Murderers to condign Puniſhment, and

and laid his Body in the Monument of his Father, delivering up the Government to his Son *Joſiah*, who was at that Time a Youth of but eight Years of Age.

Joſiah was a young Prince of an excellent Diſpoſition, ſeems to have propoſed the Example of Holy *David*, as the grand Directory of his whole Life. In the twelfth Year of his Age, he gave an eminent Inſtance of an innate Piety and Juſtice, in the Reformation of the People from their erroneous Perſuaſions concerining falſe Gods, and gaining them over to Reverence the Religion of their Country.

He repealed ſeveral of the Ordinances of his Forefathers; corrected whatever he found amiſs, and applied ſuch Remedies, where the Caſe required any ſuch Expedient, as the moſt mature and conſummate Wiſdom and Experience could have ſupplied. He regulated his Life in exact Conformity to the Laws of God, and this he ſeems to have done partly from a pious Diſpoſition, and partly from the Admonition and Advice of the Council; who reminded him, that while he reigned with true Regard to the Intereſt of his Country, and in ſtrict Obedience to the Divine Will, Succeſs would crown his Undertakings; and ſet before him the terrible Judgment that had been inflicted on his Predeceſſors for their Apoſtacy: wherefore he cauſed all the Groves to be cut down that were dedicated to falſe Gods; their Altars to be demoliſhed, and all the Donations that had been conſecrated by their Anceſtors to the Worſhip of falſe Gods, to be taken away, and treated with Deriſion.

The Demolition of Idols, and all that was erected to the Honour of falſe Gods, was general, throughout his Dominions; by which Means the true Worſhip was introduced with all the Rites and Ceremonies appertaining to the ſame.

He appointed alſo certain Magiſtrates and Commiſſioners, for the Regulation of Manners, and the ordering of Matters in private Caſes, that no leſs Care might be taken for the Diſtribution of particular Juſtice, than for the Government of Life itſelf.

He likewiſe diſpatched Meſſengers throughout all his Dominions, with Orders to receive Contributions of Gold and Silver toward the Reparation of the Temple, from thoſe that were willing to advance that Work; leaving all People at Liberty that they might have no Cauſe of Complaint.

The Money collected and brought in, the Care of the Diſpoſal of it was committed to *Amaſiah*, the Governor of the City; *Shaphan*, the Scribe; *Joah*, the Recorder; and *Hilkiah*, the High-Prieſt; with Orders immediately to enter upon the Work, and provide Artificers, and all Materials neceſſary for the Reparation.

By this Means the Temple was repaired, and a laſting Monument erected to Poſterity, of the King's Piety and Bounty.

Joſiah, in the eighteenth Year of his

his Reign, ordered *Hilkiah* the Prieſt to have the Surplus of the Gold and Silver that remained over and above the Charge of the Fabrick, caſt into Cups, Challaces, and other Veſſels, for the Uſe and Service of the Temple; ordering likewiſe, that all the Gold and Silver remaining ſtill in the Treaſury, ſhould be brought out, and applied to the ſame Purpoſes.

But the High-Prieſt, upon removing the Gold, happened to diſcover the Sacred Books of *Moſes*, as they were depoſited in the Temple, which he took out and gave to *Shaphan* to peruſe; who, upon reading them over, went to the King, and told him, They had executed all his Commands; but withal, they had juſt now found the Books of *Moſes*, which he had read over to *Joſiah*.

Upon the Reading of theſe Books, the King rent his Garment, and calling ſome of his particular Friends about him, with the Scribe himſelf, and *Hilkiah* the High-Prieſt, he ſent them to the Propheteſs, *Huldah*, the Wife of *Shallum*, a Man of great Eminence, to deſire her Interceſſion with God on their Behalf, to implore his Mercy for him and his People; for it was much to be feared, that ſome heavy Judgment ſhould befall that People for their Anceſtor's Neglect and Contempt of the Laws of *Moſes*, and that they ſhould be forced from their native Soil, to live like Vagabonds, diſperſed over the Face of the Earth, and end their Days in Miſery, without obtaining ſuch a Reconciliation from God.

The Propheteſs, upon hearing the King's Orders and Inſtructions, bad them return him this Anſwer.

That the Sentence was already pronounced, and not to be recalled, upon any Supplication or Interceſſion whatſoever; that the People were to be baniſhed their own Country, and puniſhed for their Diſobedience, with the Loſs of all the Comforts of Human Life; and that this Judgment was irrevocable, for their Obſtinacy in their ſuperſtitious Impieties, notwithſtanding ſo many earneſt Exhortations to a timely Repentance, and the Prophets menacing Predictions of all theſe Judgments, if they perſiſted in their Wickedneſs.

This unchangeable Decree was to convince them by the Event, that there is a juſt and over-ruling God; and that the Predictions which he delivered by the Mouth of his Prophets, are infallibly true, and the certain Indications of his holy Pleaſure to Mankind.

But however, ſays the Propheteſs, *tell the King, that out of a Regard to his Piety and Goodneſs, God would yet be ſo gracious as not to bring this Judgment upon the People in his Days; but that the Day of his Death ſhall be the Eve of their final Deſtruction.*

Joſiah, upon the Report of this Anſwer from *Huldah*, ſent Meſſengers throughout all the Cities; commanding all the Prieſts and Levites, and Men of all Ages and Conditions to come up to *Jeruſalem*.

The firſt Thing he did upon the Meeting, was to read the holy Books of *Moſes* to them. After which, raiſing himſelf upon an Eminence in the

the Middle of the Throng, he adminiſtered to them an Oath of Obedience to the Laws and Precepts of *Moſes*, and the Obſervance of God's holy Worſhip, which was taken by the whole Multitude, with great Alacrity and univerſal Conſent. This ſacred Oath was followed with Sacrifices and Prayers to God, for his Favour and Bleſſing.

In the next Place he laid a ſtrict Charge upon the High-Prieſt to take a particular Account of the Plate and Veſſels in the Temple, and to caſt out ſo many of them as he ſhould find to have been dedicated by any of his Anceſtors to the Worſhip of Idols.

There were many Pieces of that Kind, that were reduced to Duſt, and the Powder thrown into the Air. All the Prieſts being likewiſe put to Death that were not of the Stock of *Aaron*.

Having thus introduced a general Reformation in *Jeruſalem*, the King took a Tour through his whole Dominion, where he deſtroyed all the Relicts of *Jeroboam*'s Superſtition and Idolatry, and burnt the Bones of the Falſe Prophets upon the very Altar that *Jeroboam* had ſet up*.

Nor did *Joſiah*'s Zeal reſt here; for he ſent and went in Perſon to ſeveral other *Iſraelites* that had eſcaped the Servitude and Bondage of the *Aſſyrians*, to perſuade them at laſt to forſake the ſuperſtitious Vanities of Foreign Religions, to cleave wholly to the Worſhip of the Great God of their Fathers, according to the Rites and Cuſtoms of their Country, and ſerve him alone.

He likewiſe cauſed a ſtrict Search to be made in all Towns and Villages for the Diſcovery of any Remainders of Idolatrous Practices, that might lie concealed, even to the very Figures of the Horſes over the Porch of the Temple, that their Forefathers had dedicated to the Sun; and every Figure and Monument, to which the common People had ignorantly aſcribed divine Honours, *Joſiah* cauſed them to be taken away and deſtroyed.

Having purged the whole Nation from every Kind of Idolatry; he convened all the People at *Jeruſalem*, to celebrate the Feaſt of unleavened Bread, otherwiſe called the Paſſover, and gave the Multitude out of his own Store, thirty thouſand young Kids and Lambs, and three thouſand Oxen.

The Heads of the Prieſts contributed likewiſe to their order upon the ſame Occaſion, two thouſand ſix hundred Lambs; as did the chief of the Levites to their Tribe five thouſand Lambs, and five hundred Bullocks: this prodigious Number of Victims was offered up in Sacrifice according to the Laws of *Moſes*.

* The Prophet foretold, in the hearing of all the People, at the very Time when *Jeroboam* was offering Sacrifices, that one of the Race of *David*, *Joſiah* by Name, was to do this, whoſe Prediction was made good by the Event, three hundred ſixty one Years after the Thing was foretold.

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The Priests had the Conduct of the Solemnity; and the Precedency in their Example to the People. From the Time of *Samuel* the Prophet, to that Day, there had never been so solemn a Festival; for every thing was done according to the Direction of the Law, and the Prescriptions of ancient Custom.

Josiah after this blessed Regulation, enjoyed his Government in Peace, Honour, and Plenty; till he met his Death in the following Manner.

Pharaoh-Nechoh, King of *Egypt*, marched with a powerful Army toward *Euphrates*, against the *Medes* and *Babylonians*, who had subverted the *Assyrian* Empire, with a Design to make himself Master of *Asia*.

When he had advanced as far as *Megiddo*, a Town under the Jurisdiction of *Josiah*, that Prince absolutely refused him any Passage against the *Medes* through his Country.

Pharaoh upon this, sent a Herald, to give *Josiah* to understand, that he had no thought of Hostility toward him; nor any Design, but to have made an hasty March towards *Euphrates*; desiring him withal, not to put him upon any Necessity of making his Way by Force, as that was very much against his Inclination.

This Message of the *Egyptian* had so little Effect upon *Josiah*, that he persisted in the Denial of his Passage; his Obstinacy soon proved fatal to him; for as he was at the Head of his Army, riding up and down to give Orders from one Wing to another, an *Egyptian* pierced him with an Arrow, and by that Means decided the Matter in dispute between the two contending Kings. Finding himself in great Agony from the Stroke he had received, he commanded his Army to retire; and returning to *Jerusalem*, there dyed of the Wound. He was buried with a magnificent Solemnity, in the Sepulchre of his Ancestors, in the nine and thirtieth Year of his Age, and in the one and thirtieth of his Reign; the People mourning for him several Days, with great Sorrow and Lamentation*.

After the Death of *Josiah*, his Son *Jehoahaz* took the Government upon him in the three and twentieth Year of his Age, and kept his Court at *Jerusalem*.

He was a Man of an impious and immoral Disposition, and his Mothers Name was *Hamutal*.

The King of *Egypt*, upon his Return from the War, sent for *Jehoahaz* to come to him to *Hamath*, a City of *Syria*, where he put him in Fetters, and delivered up the Govern-

* The Prophet *Jeremiah* wrote a passionate Elegy upon this Occasion, which is yet extant; plainly foretelling the Approach of the *Babylonian* Captivity, and the subsequent Calamities; committing his Predictions to writing two Books of prophetical Presages upon this Subject.

These two Prophets were both of the Sacerdotal Race; *Jeremiah* living at *Jerusalem* from the thirteenth Year of the Reign of *Josiah*, to the Time of the Destruction of the Temple and City.

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ment to *Eliakim*, his elder Brother, by the ſame Father, but changing his Name for *Jehoiakim*, and impoſing a Tax upon the Country, of a hundred Talents of Silver, and one Talent of Gold; by this Means rendered him tributary.

As for *Jehoahaz*, he carried him along with him into *Egypt*, where he ended his Life, after he had reigned three Months and ten Days.

This Prince trod in the Steps of his abandoned Anceſtors, and followed their Example of Impiety, Injuſtice and Idolatry.

CHAP. II.

The Egyptian *defeated by the King of* Babylon. *Predictions of the Prophet* Jeremiah. *Inſtance of the Cruelty and Perfidy of* Nebuchadnezzar, *who depoſes* Jehoiakim, *and ſets up* Zedekiah *on his Throne. Second Defeat of the* Egyptians *by the ſame King.* Zedekiah's *obſtinate Contempt of the Prophet's Counſel.*

IN the fourth Year of *Jehoiakim*'s Reign, *Nebuchadnezzar* the King of *Babylon* advanced with a mighty Army to *Carchabeſa*, a City ſituate upon the *Euphrates*; with a Reſolution to make War upon *Pharaoh Nechoh*, who at that Time had all *Syria* under his Command.

The *Egyptian* well knowing that the *Babylonian* was no contemptible Enemy, took the Field with a ſtrong and numerous Army, and ſo march'd to the *Euphrates*, with a Reſolution to oppoſe him; but the two Armies engaging, the *Egyptian* was forced to retire with the Loſs of many Thouſands of his Men.

The *Babylonians* getting over the *Euphrates*, ſubdued the whole Country of *Syria* as far as *Peluſium*, *Judea* only excepted.

In the fourth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and the eighth of *Jehoiakim*, the *Babylonians* broke in furiouſly upon *Judea*, threatning them with Deveſtation, unleſs they would content themſelves with the Condition of Tributaries, as the reſt of the Inhabitants of *Syria* were.

Upon this Menace, *Jehoiakim* ſubmitted to purchaſe his Peace with a Sum of Money; and for the Space of full three Years, he made due Payment of his Contribution; but the Year following, upon the Credit of an idle Report, that the *Egyptian* was advancing upon an Expedition againſt the King of *Babylon*, *Jehoiakim* refuſed to pay him his Tribute, though he quickly found himſelf miſerably diſappointed in his Expectation, for the *Egyptians* durſt not look the *Babylonians* in the Face.

This the Prophet *Jeremiah* had many Times foretold, and warned him of, adding moreover, that he would find the *Egyptians* a broken Reed to truſt to.

He preſaged likewiſe the Fate of *Jeruſalem*, and that it was ſuddenly to be deſtroyed by the *Babylonians*, and *Jehoiakim* himſelf to be made Priſoner.

But theſe Warnings, were not only

unobſerved, but treated by the generality of the People with the utmoſt Contempt. There were ſome that exhibited formal Accuſations againſt the Prophet to the King, and would have had him puniſhed as a Mover of Sedition.

The Cauſe, in fine, was brought before the Council; and the Majority were for putting him to Death; but the Reaſon of Things is not always determined by a Plurality of Voices; ſo that ſome, better adviſed than the reſt, were for diſcharging him the Court, and diverting the Blow; obſerving, that *Jeremiah* was not the only Man that had foretold theſe Calamities to the City, but that *Micah* had propheſied to the ſame Purpoſe before him; as well as ſeveral others, without being called to Account for it by the Government; nay, that they were rather had in Honour and Eſteem for their Predictions, as the Prophets of the Lord.

By this gentle Method of Reaſoning, the Council was wrought upon to change their Minds, and to recall the Sentence.

The Prophet committed his Predictions to Writing, and upon a Day of Faſting, when the People were met together in the Temple, in the ninth Month of the fifth Year of the Reign of *Jehoiakim*, he read the Book to the Congregation; wherein was contained the whole Hiſtory of what was to befall the Temple, the City and the People.

The Princes, upon the hearing of this Book, took it away from the Prophet, commanding both himſelf for the Defence of the Rights of him and his Scribe *Baruch*, immediately to depart, without letting any body known where to find them.

Then they carried the Book to the King, who ordered his Secretary to read it to him, and his Friends about him. The King was ſo greatly alarmed when he heard the awful Contents, that he tore the Book, threw it into the Fire, and ordered *Jeremiah* and *Baruch* to be immediately brought to him and puniſhed. But they were already withdrawn out of the Way.

Soon after this Event, *Jehoiakim* being affrighted with ſo many diſmal Predictions, received the King of *Babylon* with his Army into the City; and thinking himſelf ſecure from any Danger, had made no Preparations for the Defence of the Right of his Crown. But the *Babylonian*, upon his Admittance, broke his Conditions, and put the Flower of the Youth of *Jeruſalem*, together with the King himſelf, to the Sword; commanding his Body to be caſt into the Fields without the Walls of the City, and conſtituting his Son *Jehoiakim* King, both of the City and Country, in his Father's Stead.

He carried away near three thouſand Men of Note, and Quality, Captives to *Babylon*; in which Number was the Prophet *Ezekiel*, being at that Time a Youth.

This was the End of the King *Jehoiakim*, who lived ſix and thirty Years, and reigned eleven; and his Son *Jehoiakim* ſucceeded him. His Mother's Name was *Nehuſhta*, of *Jeru-*

Jeruſalem; and the Time of his Reign was three Months and ten Days.

When *Nebuchadnezzar* came to a ſerious Review of his late Tranſactions, he could not approve his placing *Jeboiakin* upon the Throne, as it appeared reaſonable to him, that the young Prince would endeavour to revenge the Perfidy he had practiſed towards his deceaſed Father, by exciting a Rebellion.

Upon this Conſideration he ſent away an Army to *Jeruſalem*. Now *Jehoiakim*, being a juſt and humane Prince, could not endure to ſee the City in Danger of being utterly deſtroyed for his Sake; and therefore entered in a Treaty with the King of *Babylon*'s Deputies, ſurrendered the City on Condition of the Inhabitants being exempt from any Kind of Violence, and delivered Hoſtages for the Performance of all the Articles ſpecified.

But before the Expiration of the Year, the King of *Babylon* breaking his Faith with them, commanded his Officers to ſecure all the Youth of the City, and all kinds of Artificers, and to bring them to him bound and fettered: ſo that ten thouſand eight hundred thirty-two Perſons (among whom were *Jeboiakim* himſelf, his Mother, and his Kindred) by the King's Command, were all kept in Cuſtody.

Nebuchadnezzar having thus deprived *Jeboiakim* of his Crown and Dignity, advanced *Zedekiah*, his Father's Brother, to the Government in his Place; obliging him by Oath, neither to attempt any Innovations in that Country, nor directly or indirectly join with, or aſſiſt the *Egyptians*. He was one and twenty Years of Age when he entered upon the Government; and he and *Jeboiakim* were Brothers by the Mother's Side. *Zedekiah* on his Elevation diſcovered no Regard to the Laws of God, nor the Intereſt of the People, but gave looſe to the immediate Sallies of a vicious Inclination, and mixed with the Herd in the Idolatry and Depravity of the Age, inſomuch, that the Prophet *Jeremiah* often exhorted him to change his Courſe of Life, and betake himſelf to the Exerciſe of Piety and Juſtice, regardleſs of what his Courtiers, or his falſe Prophets told him; a lewd People who had abuſed him in their Promiſes and Predictions, when they told him the *Babylonians* ſhould never beſiege *Jeruſalem* again; and that whenever they encountered, the *Egyptians* ſhould overcome them.

As this was all falſe, and would appear ſo to be by the Event, *Zedekiah* could not for the preſent but acknowledge the Advice of the Prophet to be reaſonable, and that it was his Intereſt for to believe it; but when he attended to the Counſels of mercenary Sycophants, the Prophet's Addreſs vaniſhed from his Mind.

At this very Juncture, *Ezekiel* being at *Babylon*, foretold the Deſtruction of the Temple, and ſent the Prediction of it to *Jeruſalem*. Now the two Prophets agreed exactly in the particular Circumſtances of the Town's being

being taken by Force, and *Zedekiah* carried away Captive; but the Thing, and the only Thing that ſtaggered *Zedekiah* in the Belief of the Prophecy, was this; *Ezekiel* foretold, that *Zedekiah* ſhould not ſee *Babylon*. And *Jeremiah* affirmed, that the King himſelf ſhould carry him Priſoner thither.

This ſeeming Inconſiſtency, or at leaſt Diverſity of Expreſſion, gave *Zedekiah* ſome Sort of Colour for doubting the Truth of the other Circumſtances wherein they agreed, tho' the following Events made good every Thing that had been foretold.

After an Alliance of eight Years, between the two Kings, *Zedekiah* ſhamefully broke his Contract, and went over to the Intereſt of the *Egyptians*, aſſured that their Power united would be able to cruſh the King of *Babylon*. But the *Babylonian*, upon the firſt Notice of this Treachery, marched his Army toward *Zedekiah*, laid his Country deſolate, forced his Caſtles and ſtrong Holds, and ſo advanced forward to the Attack, even of *Jeruſalem* itſelf.

The *Egyptian* being given to underſtand with what Difficulties his Friend and Ally *Zedekiah* was ſurrounded, advanced immediately to his Relief, with a Reſolution to attempt the raiſing the Siege.

Now the *Babylonian*, upon Intelligence of his March and Deſign, inſtead of waiting for his Arrival, withdrew from the Siege, and advancing towards his Army, a general Engagement enſued, and the *Egyptians* were totally routed.

The Siege being raiſed, or rather reſpited upon this Occaſion, the falſe Prophets ſuggeſted a thouſand Deluſions to *Zedekiah*; ſuch as the Folly of apprehending any Danger from the *Babylonians*, or fearing that they ſhould drive the *Hebrews* from their Habitations, or carry them captive to *Babylon*, ; whereas it was rather to be expected, on the other Hand, that their Priſoners that were already exported ſhould be called back again, and all the Plate and Treaſure that the King had carried away, reſtored to the Temple.

But *Jeremiah*, on the contrary, aſſured the King, that Events would turn out in direct Contrariety to what his Flatterers had falſly inſinuated, poſitively charging them with Impoſture and Deluſion, and affirming, that there was no Good to be expected from the *Egyptians*; but that they ſhould firſt be overcome, and the *Babylonian* Army return back to beſiege *Jeruſalem*; and that as many of them as ſhould ſurvive the Sword and Famine, ſhould be carried away captive, their Houſes pillaged, their Goods taken away, the Temple and City plundered, and laid waſte by Fire and Sword, without any Diſtinction of Age, Sex, or Condition.

The Terms of the Prophecy were, *We are condemned to ſerve theſe People, and their Poſterity, for ſeventy Years*; *and the* Medes *and* Perſians, *at the ſeventy Years End, ſhall deliver us from that Bondage, by the utter*

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Extinction of the Babylonian *Empire. After which Time, being ſet at Liberty by their Aſſiſtance, we ſhall return hither again, rebuild the Temple, and reſtore the City to its former State.*

Theſe Words of the Prophet gained the Belief of the major Part of the People; but the leading Men, and the Licentious, Atheiſtical Multitude, looked upon what he ſaid, as the Diſcourſe of a Mad-Man, and treated him accordingly.

As *Jeremiah* was going toward *Anathoth*, the Place of his Birth, about twenty Furlongs diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, he was met upon the Way by a buſy Magiſtrate, who apprehended him, and took him into Cuſtody, upon a Pretence, that he was a Deſerter, and going over to the King of *Babylon*.

The Prophet denied the Accuſation, and declared in his own Defence, that he was going to the Place of his Nativity. But the other would not believe him, and therefore carried him away to the Miniſters of State, and Officers of Juſtice; where, after a formal Examination, they ſet him aſide as a Malefactor condemned to die; and in this miſerable Condition, he continued for a conſiderable Space.

But in the ninth Year of *Zedekiah*'s Reign, the tenth Month, and the tenth Day of that Month, the King of *Babylon* came once again with his Army to *Jeruſalem*; and laying Siege to it, attempted, by the Exertion of all his Strength and Artifice, during the Space of eighteen Months, to ſubdue it. But it ſtill held out, not only againſt a powerful Enemy before it, but a raging Peſtilence and Famine, in the Midſt of it. *Jeremiah* being in Priſon all this while, and crying out to the Multitude to ſet open the Gates, and receive the *Babylonians* into the City; as they had no other Way to ſave themſelves, their Families, and the Town, from a certain and an inevitable Ruin; aſſuring them alſo, that thoſe who ſtaid in the City muſt expect to periſh, either by the Sword, or by Famine; whereas thoſe who fled out to the Enemy would ſave their Lives; but the Princes, in the Depth of their Extremity, where ſo far from giving Ear to the Prophet's Preſage and Advice, that they repreſented him to the King, as a turbulent Man, a Mutineer, and a Diſcourager of the People, with his idle Stories of Miſery and Deſolation; ſuggeſting that the Garriſon was hearty and reſolute enough to defend the Place to the laſt Extremity, if he did not with his ill-boding Menaces of Slavery and Deſtruction, damp their Zeal and Courage.

The King was not by Diſpoſition raſh or cruel, but at this critical Juncture, fearing the Effects of oppoſing the leading and principal Perſons of the City, he reſigned the Prophet to their Diſpoſal; wherefore they went in all Haſte to the Priſon; took out the Prophet, and let him down by a Rope into a filthy Pit, where he continued up to the Neck in Mud, as they intended to choak him.

As he was in this Condition, a favourite Servant of the King's, an *Ethiopian* born, went and told *Zedekiah* how they had treated the Prophet; giving it his Opinion, that his great Men and Favourites had not done well in the Aggravation of his Misfortune, by expoſing him to Death, ſo much more grievous than that which he was reaſonably to expect in his Chains.

This Conduct of the Servant induced the King heartily to repent his having left the Prophet to the Diſcretion of his Enemies; ordered the *Ethiopian* to take thirty truſty Men out of his Family, with Ropes, and whatever he ſhould find neceſſary for ſaving of him, and to join with them in getting of him out of the Pit with all poſſible Expedition.

The Servant did as he was ordered, and ſet the Prophet at Liberty; who was ſoon after this brought privately to the King, and had this Queſtion put to him; whether or no he could procure him from Heaven any preſent Relief under his miſerable Circumſtance? The Prophet anſwered him that he could; but that People would neither believe him, nor follow his Counſels, adding in Words to this Effect, *All your pretended Friends, are my mortal Enemies: they look upon me as a falſe Wretch, and are at this Inſtant in a Conſpiracy to deſtroy me; and where are thoſe Impoſtors now, that deluded the People into a Belief that they were out of Danger from the* Babylonians? *So that by telling you the very Truth, I may endanger my Life.*

The King, upon this, promiſed the Prophet upon Oath, that he would neither take away his Life himſelf, nor ſuffer any of his People to do it.

Jeremiah took his Word and Honour for it, and adviſed him by all Means to deliver up the City into the Hands of the King of *Babylon*; this was the only Way in the World, to be ſafe in his own Perſon, to avoid the imminent Danger he was in; preventing the Burning of the Temple, and the laying of the City level with the Ground. He aſſured him moreover by the ſpecial Direction of God himſelf, that if he purſued any other Meaſures, all the Calamities that ſhould enſue upon his Miſcarriages, with the utter Ruin of himſelf, his Family, and his People, would be charged to his Account.

The King then told him, that he had a great Inclination to take his Counſel for the common Good; but was afraid leſt ſome of his Friends that were already gone over to the *Babylonians*, ſhould accuſe him to *Nebuchadnezzar*, and put him in Danger of his Life. The Prophet bad him not fear on that Account; for if he delivered up the City, neither himſelf, nor his Wives, his Children, or the Temple itſelf, ſhould ſuffer any thing.

After theſe Words the King diſmiſſed the Prophet, with a Charge not to make any Diſcovery, even to the Princes themſelves, of what had paſſed in this Conference; but if any come to have a Hint that there had been ſuch a Meeting, and enquire into the Buſineſs, it might be pre-

tended,

tended that the Prophet came to move the King for his Liberty.

The Prophet did as he was ordered, and gave that Anſwer to all People that aſked him his Buſineſs with *Zedekiah*.

CHAP. III.

The taking of Jeruſalem. *Cruelties exerciſed upon* Zedekiah. *Conqueſt and Captivity of the* Egyptians. *Miraculous Story of* Daniel, Shadrach, Meſhach, *and* Abednego. *Preferment of* Daniel *for interpreting Dreams. Death of* Nebuchadnezzar.

DURING theſe Tranſactions the King of *Babylon* went on vigorouſly with the Siege; his Works were finiſhed, and his Towers carried up ſo high, as to command the Town, and beat the Defendants from the Walls; and theſe Preparations were made round the City in order for a general Aſſault. The Place was as reſolutely defended as it was vigorouſly aſſailed, the beſieged having Plague and Famine to contend within the Town, as well as Enemies, and other Difficulties without. They ſtood firm againſt all Stratagems and Machines, oppoſing one Inſtance to another, as if the Diſpute had been Matter of Skill and Art, as well as Force; the Beſiegers Buſineſs being to take the City, and the Safety of the beſieged conſiſting in eluding or diverting the Plots and endeavours of the Enemy.

This Conteſt laſted eighteen Months; but in the End, for Want of Proviſions within the Town, and of Numbers to maintain it, againſt the Multitudes of Beſiegers, furniſhed with all Manner of Arms and warlike Inſtruments, they were reduced to the Neceſſity of delivering it up.

It was taken in the eleventh Year, and the ninth Day of the fourth Month of the Reign of *Zedekiah*, by the Commanders to whom the Care of the Siege was committed by *Nebuchadnezzar*, who at that Time was at *Riblah*. The Captains, with the Reſt of the Soldiery, went into the Temple, which King *Zedekiah* perceiving, he took his Wives, Children, Commanders and Friends, and they all fled away privately by a narrow Paſſage toward the Deſart. But the *Babylonians* getting Intelligence of this Eſcape, by means of Deſerters, they made after them early the next Morning, overtook and ſurrounded them at a Place not far from *Jericho*.

Zedekiah's Friends and Companions, in his Flight, ſeeing the Enemy advance toward them, quitted their Maſter, and ran ſeveral Ways to avoid perſonal Danger. The King being in a Manner abandoned, with his Wives and Children, and a ſmall Number of his Company, fell into the Hands of the Enemy, who preſently carried them to the King of *Babylon*.

Nebuchadnezzar no ſooner beheld him, than he upbraided him with Perfidy and Ingratitude, in Words to

to the following Effect. *Did not you promiſe me to manage the Power and Authority that I put you in Poſſeſſion of, for my Advantage, for making you a King in your Brother* Jehoiakin's *place, by your employing of the Credit and Intereſt that I gave you to the ruin of your Patron and Benefactor? But that God is great and juſt; who, for the Puniſhment of your Treachery and Ingratitude, hath now made you my Priſoner.*

When the King had thus ſeverely reproached him, he immediately cauſed his Children and his Friends to be put to Death before his Face, and in the Sight of the reſt of the Captives; commanding *Zedekiah*'s Eyes to be put out, and his wretched Perſon afterwards to be carried away in Chains to *Babylon*.

This Proceeding verified the two Prophecies of *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*; which *Zedekiah* ſo little regarded becauſe there appeared ſomething of a Contradiction between them; the former foretelling, that he ſhould be taken captive, and being carried to *Babylon*, ſhould ſpeak with the King himſelf, and ſee him Face to Face; but *Ezekiel*'s Prediction was, that he ſhould be carried away to *Babylon*, and ſhould not ſee him; which he could not do theſe, after he was deprived of his Sight*. Thus was rendered extinct the Kings of the Race of *David*, after a Succeſſion of one and twenty Kings, during the Space of five hundred and fifteen Years, ſix Months, and ten Days, including the twenty Years Reign of *Saul*, who was of another Tribe.

Nebuchadnezzar, after this great Victory obtained, ſent *Nebuzar-Adan*, his Commander in Chief, to *Jeruſalem*, with Orders to pillage the Temple, and burn it; to do the like to the Palace; and after the laying the City level with the Ground, to carry away the People captive to *Babylon*. In the eleventh Year of the Reign of *Zedekiah*, *Nebuzar-Adan* putting his Inſtructions into Execution; taking away out of the Temple all the Veſſels of Gold and Silver, *Solomon*'s great Laver, with the Brazen Pillars, and their Chapiters, with the Golden Tables and Candleſticks; and after this General Plunder, he firſt ſet the Temple on Fire; and after that, laid the Palace and the City in Aſhes.

This happened on the firſt Day of the fifth Month; the Eleventh of *Zedekiah*, and the eighteenth Year of the Reign of *Nebuchadnezzar*. The Temple was burnt four hundred and ſeventy Years, ſix Months, and ten

* This may ſerve to convince, even the moſt ignorant, of the Power and Wiſdom of God, and of the Conſtancy of his Counſels, through all the various Ways of his Operations; it may likewiſe ſhew us that God's foreknowledge of Things is certain, and his Providence regular, in the ordering of Events; beſides it holds forth a moſt exemplary Inſtance to us, of the Danger of giving way to the Motions of Incredulity and Folly that take from us the Means of diſcerning the Judgments that threaten us.

Tem-

Days from the Building of it; one thouſand and ſixty-two Years, ſix Months, and ten Days, from the *Iſraelites* coming out of the Land of *Egypt*; one thouſand nine hundred fifty Years, ſix Months, and ten Days from the Deluge; and three thouſand five hundred and thirteen Years, ſix Months, and ten Days from the Creation of the World.

Upon the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the Tranſportation of the People, *Nebuzar-Adan* took the following Perſons Priſoners with him.

There was the (*a*) High-Prieſt, *Seraiah*, and after him *Zephaniah*, who was the next Prieſt in Dignity; three head Keepers of the Temple; the firſt Eunuch of the Bed-Chamber, with ſeven of the King's Friends, beſide the King's Secretary, and other Men of Note, to the Number of ſixty; which were brought altogether to the King, who was then at *Riblah*, a City of *Syria*.

The King cauſed the Heads of the High-Prieſt, and the great Men, to be ſtruck off in that City; but the Multitude of the Priſoners, together with *Zedekiah* himſelf, he ordered to be bound, and carried captive to *Babylon*, together with *Jehozadack**, the High-Prieſt, to be taken and bound along with them.

Having gone through the Royal Line, and the Succeſſion of Kings, from Father to Son, it will be neceſſary to obſerve the ſame Method with the High-Prieſts, who, from Time to Time, in a continued Succeſſion under thoſe Kings, exerciſed the ſacerdotal Office.

The firſt Pontifex after the Building of *Solomon*'s Temple was *Zadock*.

After him came his Son *Abimaaz*. And after *Abimaaz*, *Azariah*; and ſo forward. *Joram*, *Phineas*, *Sudeas*, *Julus*, *Jotham*, *Urias*, *Nerius*, *Oſeas*, *Saddumus*, *Elcius*, *Sareas*, and *Jehoſadock*, who was carried away to *Babylon*.

All theſe handed down the Pontificate in a continued Succeſſion in their Families, from Generation to Generation.

Upon the King's Return to *Babylon*, *Zedekiah* was committed to Priſon, where he died, and afterward had the Honour of a royal Sepulchre.

The holy Veſſels the King took out of the Temple, he dedicated to his Idols; allotted Habitations to the People in *Babylon*, and ſet *Jehozadock* at Liberty.

Now *Nebuzar-Adan*, the General that brought away the People Priſoners, left the poorer Sort of People, and the Deſerters, under the Command of *Gedaliah*, the Son of *Ahikam*, an eminent Perſon, both for Generoſity and Juſtice, who allotted

(*a*) High Prieſt *Seraiah*. The Perſon whom *Jeremiah* had deſired to read an Account of his Prophecies to the *Jews*, then in Captivity, and for which he was properly calculated from the Nature of his Office.

* This *Jehozadock* was the Son of *Seraiah*, who was put to death at *Riblah*.

lotted his Priſoners ſuch a Proportion of Ground to improve and live upon, on condition of paying ſuch a certain Tribute to the King.

The Prophet *Jeremiah* was alſo (*b*) diſcharged from his Impriſonment; and the King having given Order to the Governor to take a particular Care of him, *Gedaliah* propoſed to the Prophet to go with him to *Babylon*, as it was but Reaſon the King ſhould be at the Charge of his Journey; or if he did not approve of that Place, deſired he would nominate any other, and he would write to the King about it.

The Prophet's Anſwer was, That he had no mind to remove at all, but rather ſtay where he was, and take his Part in the miſerable Ruins of his native Country.

Nebuzar-Adan, being informed how the Prophet ſtood affected, gave *Gedaliah* a ſtrict Charge to ſee him well provided for; made him ſeveral conſiderable Preſents himſelf, and ſo left him, and returned to *Babylon*.

Jeremiah upon this made Choice of (*c*) *Mizpah* for the Place of his Abode, having firſt obtained of *Nebuzar-Adan* *Baruch*'s Liberty, as well as his own, whom he took for his Companion.

Baruch was the Son of *Neriah*, a Perſon nobly born, and perfectly well ſkilled in the Language of his Country.

The Burning and the Sacking of *Jeruſalem*, and the Return of the *Babylonians* into their own Country, was by this Time made known to all the Deſerters that had left the City in the Time of the Siege; and ſo they gathered together from all Places in Throngs to *Gedaliah* at *Mizpah*.

The principal Men among them were *Johanan*, the Son of *Kareah*; *Jezaniah*, and *Saraiah*, with ſome others. And beſides theſe, there was *Iſhmael*, a Perſon of Royal Blood, but of a falſe and malicious Diſpoſition.

This Man, in the Time of the Siege, fled to *Bathal*, King of the *Ammonites*, for Sanctuary, where he had continued ever ſince.

Upon the Application of theſe People to *Gedaliah*, he gave them an Invitation to continue there, and to plant; for they might live quietly, and at Eaſe, without any Danger from the *Babylonians*; binding himſelf by an Oath to ſtand by, and aſſiſt them, if any Man ſhould offer to moleſt, or trouble them. And for

(*b*) Diſcharged from his Impriſonment. The Prophet was treated in this reſpectful Manner by the *Chaldeans*, on Account of the repeated Predictions he had made in the Favour of that People, and the many Exhortations he had given the *Jews* to ſubmit to their Authority.

(*c*) *Mizpah* for the Place of his Abode. This City, to which *Jeremiah* thought proper to retire, had been a Place of great Eſtimation in the Time of the Judges, but falling to Decay, was rebuilt many Years after their Time by King *Aſa*.

It was ſituated on the Borders of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and was, at this Time, the Reſidence of *Gedaliah*.

their

their farther Encouragement he thus addreſſed them.

Do but you reſolve among yourſelves what Town or Place you would ſettle in, and you ſhall have ſome of my People with you, to aſſiſt you in preparing and fiting up Habitations; only you muſt take Care not to ſlip the Seaſon of providing for the next Vintage and Harveſt, that you may not want Corn, Wine or Oil next Winter for your Subſiſtance.

When he had given them this Encouragement and Aſſurance, he left every Man at Liberty to diſpoſe of himſelf at his own Diſcretion, and to chuſe for his Reſidence what Place he pleaſed.

The Report of *Gedaliah*'s Generoſity, Humanity, and Tenderneſs, towards the Fugitives, who had applied themſelves to him for Refuge, gained him ſo great a Reputation with all the neighbouring Nations, that they repaired to him from all Parts, and quickly made up a conſiderable Plantation; for they had Lands aſſigned them, upon Condition only of paying a certain Acknowledgment to the King of *Babylon*.

Johanan and the reſt of the great Men had a very high Eſteem for the Courteſy of *Gedaliah* to the Planters, and therefore informed him in Friendſhip and Reſpect, that there was a Conſpiracy carried on againſt him, between the King of the *Ammonites* and *Iſhmael*; that *Iſhmael* was to aſſaſſinate him in a treacherous Manner; who being a Branch of the Royal Family, he intended to aſſume the Government of the *Iſraelites*.

They gave it as their Opinion, That the ready Way to ſecure *Gedaliah* againſt this Practice, would be for them privately to diſpatch *Iſhmael*; which, with his Leave, they would undertake, as they were afraid, if this Miſchief was not timely prevented, it would prove inevitably the Ruin of all the *Iſraelites*, in the End.

Gedaliah informed them, That he could not believe it poſſible for any Man to be ſo barbarous and ungrateful, that lay under ſo many Obligations to the contrary; neither could it enter into his Head, that a Man who was never known to do any ſuch Thing under the Provocation of his Neceſſities, ſhould now be in a Plot to deſtroy that Perſon himſelf, whom, by all the Ties of Honour and Hoſpitality, he was obliged to defend and preſerve, though with the Hazard of his own Life, if it ſhould have been attempted by any other Man whatſoever.

To ſum up the Affair, he told them, That admitting the Information to be true, he had much rather loſe his own Life, than take away the Life of any Man that had committed himſelf to his Truſt.

Johanan, and his Companions, finding, from this Declaration, that all they ſaid was to no Purpoſe, they went their Way.

About thirty Days after, *Iſhmael*, with ten of his Friends, paid a Viſit to *Gedaliah* at *Mizpah*, where they were received with all the Freedom and Reſpect imaginable. They drank

drank very plentifully, till *Gedaliah* and his Companions were intoxicated; which the other Party obſerving, they took the Opportunity of falling upon them, and without any Difficulty killed the Maſter of the Houſe, and all the reſt of the Guards.

It was now the Dead of the Night, and all the People, as well Soldiers as others, ſecurely aſleep; ſo that they made the ſame Havock in the Streets, as they had done at *Gedaliah*'s juſt before, deſtroying and murdering all they could find, whether Jews or *Babylonians*, without any Diſtinction.

The next Day there came up to the City a Company of about fourſcore Men out of the Country, with Preſents for *Gedaliah*, knowing nothing as yet of the Maſſacre. As ſoon as *Iſhmael* ſaw them, he called them into *Gedaliah*'s, ſhut the Doors upon them, and cut their Throats in the Palace, and cauſed their Bodies afterward to be thrown into a Pit, where they might lay concealed.

There was not a Man of that Number that eſcaped, except a few that promiſed to make Diſcovery of Goods, Cloaths, and Corn, that were concealed under Ground, upon Condition of their being reprieved.

Some of them were ſpared upon theſe Terms; but the common People of *Miſpah*, Men, Women and Children, were all carried away; and among the reſt, the Daughters of *Zedekiah*, which *Nebuzar-Adan* had left under the Care of *Gedaliah*.

Iſhmael immediately went away with the News of this Exploit to the King of the *Ammonites*; but *Johanan*, with the reſt of the leading Men, hearing of the horrid Maſſacre at *Miſpah*, and the Death of *Gedaliah*, were ſo incenſed, that raiſing all the Men they could muſter, by their reſpective Influence, they joined in the Purſuit of *Iſhmael*, whom they overtook at the Fountain of *Hebron*.

The very Sight of the Purſuers rejoiced the Hearts of the Priſoners that *Iſhmael* was carrying away with him; for ſuſpecting them at firſt Sight to be Friends, coming to their Aſſiſtance, they went over immediately, one and all, to the Party of *Johanan*; but *Iſhmael*, with only eight of his Companions, fled to the King of the *Ammonites*.

Johanan, in the mean Time, with the People he had taken from *Iſhmael*, marched to a Place that is called *Mandra*, and there they ſtaid one Day, thinking to fly into *Egypt*, leſt the *Babylonians*, in a Rage for the Murder of their Governor, ſhould fall upon them; however, for their better Security, they took up a Reſolution to conſult *Jeremiah*, (*d*) what

(*d*) What Courſe to take. Sufficiently humbled by the Deſtruction of their Country, and ſtruck with the Captivity of their Brethren, the Remnant of the *Jews*, who were not carried into *Babylon*, were awakened into a Senſe of Almighty Power, and an humble Supplication of his Mercy.

Adverſity is the beſt School for Wiſdom, and

Courſe to take. Accordingly they put the Queſtion to him; promiſing upon Oath to act in ſtrict Conformity with his Advice.

The Prophet aſſured them he would do his utmoſt for their Satisfaction; and upon the tenth Day after this Application, God appeared to him, and bad him go and tell *Johanan*, and the Reſt of the Commanders, *That if they continued where they were, he would aſſiſt and ſecure them againſt any Harm from the* Babylonians, *of whom they were ſo much afraid; but if after this Warning they went into* Egypt, *they might expect the ſame Fate that had befallen their Brethren before them.*

This was the Meſſage the Prophet delivered them by God's expreſs Direction, though they could hardly believe it to be the Will of God, that they ſhould continue where they were; taking it rather for an Invention of the Prophet's, in Favour of *Baruch*, his Diſciple, in order to expoſe them to the Wrath of the *Babylonians*; ſo that *Johanan* and the Reſt of the People, in Contempt of God's Word by his Prophet, went away into *Egypt*, and carried *Jeremiah* and *Baruch* along with them.

Upon their Arrival thither, it was revealed from Heaven to the Prophet, that the King of *Babylon* ſhould bring an Army into *Egypt*; and *Jeremiah* was commanded to tell the People that *(e) Egypt* ſhould be taken, where Part of them ſhould be killed, and afterwards the Reſt ſhould be carried away Captives to *Babylon*. For, in the fifth Year after the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the three and twentieth of *Nebuchadnezzar*, he made an Inroad in *Cœle-Syria*; and upon ſubduing it, carried his victorious Army into the Country of the *Ammonites* and *Moabites*; whom when he had ſubjected, he made a furious Incurſion into *Egypt*; killed the reigning King, ſet up another in his Place, and the Jews whom he found there were carried away a ſecond Time Priſoners to *Babylon*.

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and the Mind, tho' ſo hardened in Error, naturally looks up to the Divine Being, as its only Support on the Appearance of Calamity; an Obſervation which the Behaviour of the *Jews* upon this Occaſion ſufficiently verified.

(e) Egypt ſhould be taken. The Almighty Wiſdom having determined to ſettle the *Jews* among the *Chaldeans* for ſome Time, till Captivity had brought them to a proper Knowledge of their Sins, here expreſſes his particular Diſapprobation of their having any Connection with the *Egyptians*, whom they might in Reality, conſider as the Source of all they had ſuffered, ſince the ſuperſtitious Ceremonies of that People was the principal Cauſe of their Corruption, and conſequently of their being forſaken by their Divine Protector.

From this it muſt not, however, be inferred, that the *Chaldeans* were not an idolatrous Country, for on the contrary, they were equally remarkable with the *Egyptians* for the Number of their Idols; but the *Jews* having been before under Subjection to the *Egyptian* Empire, the Lord thought it moſt proper, if it may be preſumed to judge of unerring Wiſdom, to give them a Change of Maſters, to make a deeper Impreſſion of their Diſobedience, and to manifeſt his own Power, in redeeming them out of the Hands of the two moſt mighty Empires at that Time in being.

Such was the wretched Fate of the *Hebrews*, who, in Conſequence of their Diſobedience of the Divine Will, were twice carried away beyond the *Euphrates*; for the ten Tribes were firſt tranſported by the *Aſſyrians* out of *Samaria*, in the Reign of *Hoſea*; and the other two, by *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of the *Chaldeans* and the *Babylonians*, upon the taking of *Jeruſalem*.

Now *Shalmanezer* tranſplanted the *Chuthites* into the Country of the *Iſraelites*, out of the Heart of *Medea* and *Perſia*; and they were called *Samaritans* from the Name of the Place into which they were tranſplanted; but the King of *Babylon* carried away the other two Tribes, without introducing any other in their Stead.

And this was the Reaſon that *Judea*, with *Jeruſalem*, and the Temple, lay wholly abandoned for the Space of ſeventy Years.

The Time betwixt the Captivity of the ten Tribes, and the Tranſmigration of the other two, was one hundred and thirty Years, ſix Months, and ten Days.

The King of *Babylon* appointed a ſelect Number of *Jewiſh* Youths, who were eminent for their Birth and Beauty, to be trained up for the Service of his Court.

To this End, he procured them the beſt Tutors that could be found, and ordered divers of them to be ſet apart for the Practice of Muſic vocal and inſtrumental.

He ſent them their Meat from his own Table, and took great Care to have them inſtructed in the *Chaldean* Diſcipline and Learning, in which they made a very conſiderable Progreſs in a ſhort Time.

There were four of *Zedekiah*'s Relations in the Number, whoſe Names were *Daniel*, *Ananias*, *Miſhael*, and *Azariah*; but the *Babylonians* changed their Names, and called *Daniel*, *Belteſhazzar*; *Ananias*, *Shadrach*; *Miſhael*, *Meſhach*; and *Azariah*, *Abednego*.

The King had a great Eſteem for them all, both on Account of the Sweetneſs of their Diſpoſition, and the extraordinary Force of their Underſtanding.

Daniel thinking the voluptuous Fare of the *Babyloniſh* Court improper for Perſons in the Condition of himſelf and his Countrymen, they intreated the Eunuch that had the Care of them, to uſe thoſe Delicacies which the King ſent them from his own Table, for the Service of himſelf, and his Family; as Pulſe, or Dates, or any ordinary Food, would be to them full as ſatisfactory. The Eunuch told them that he would willingly gratify them; but if they ſhould grow lean, upon ſuch an abſtemious Way of Living, look leſs amiable, or appear in a leſs agreeable Habit of Body, he was afraid the King might have ſome Suſpicion of the Matter, and take Offence at it; which would endanger his Life, eſpecially as thoſe who lived upon daintier Food, would appear more ruddy and healthy than themſelves.

As they found the Eunuch not ſo obſtinate in oppoſing their Requeſt as they imagined he would have been, they

they preſſed him to make the Experiment only for ten Days; and after that Time, if he found the Change did not ſo well agree with them as their former Allowance, and that they did not keep their Health, Colour, and Habit of Body, that they had before, he might bring them back again to the King's preſcribed Method of living.

The Eunuch was prevailed upon to make Trial of it; and when he found them ſo far from being the worſe for the Alteration, that they grew more vigorous upon it, both in the Diſpoſition of their Bodies and Minds, he made no longer a Scruple of complying with their Deſires, but he gave them what they demanded, and kept the King's Allowance to himſelf.

This Change agreed ſo well with *Daniel* and his Friends, that, comparatively, they ſeemed to be better provided for than the reſt, and all their Faculties were better adapted, either for Study or Labour; being neither ſurfeited with Variety, nor rendered effeminate by Luxury.

By this temperate Way of living, their Spirits were kept clear and active, as appeared by their wonderful Improvement in the *Hebrew*, as well as the *Chaldean* Learning; but *Daniel*'s Progreſs was amazing, for he had got ſuch an Inſight into the Arts, that he took upon him the expounding of Dreams, and had many Times Viſions of his own to work upon.

About two Years after the Deſtruction of *Egypt*, *Nebuchadnezzar* had a Viſion, and a Revelation from God in his Sleep, of the Meaning of it; but afterwards, when he came to riſe from his Bed, he had utterly forgot it. Upon which he immediately ſent for his learned Men, as Chaldeans, Magi, and Prophets, and told them, that he had a ſtrange Dream, but it was now utterly out of his Head, and therefore required them to tell him what it was, and what was the Signification of it?

They made him Anſwer, That as to the firſt Part of his Propoſition, it was a Thing not to be done. But if he would be pleaſed to tell them the Dream, they would be anſwerable to give him the Interpretation of it.

The King in a Rage commanded them, without farther Ceremony, to *(f)* tell him his Dream, or they ſhould die for it. But as they could not undertake it, they were ordered to be put to Death.

When *Daniel* came to underſtand that the Wiſe Men were all to be put

(f) Tell him his Dream. Though the *Chaldeans* were remarkably expert in the Interpretation of Dreams, which they undertook to diſcover by ſome particular Remarks, as well as to foretel future Events by the Revolution of the heavenly Bodies, yet here they declared the Impoſſibility of knowing a Dream which they never heard of, and the Unreaſonableneſs of requiring an Interpretation of what the King had utterly forgot; a Circumſtance which they told the King was entirely unprecedented, and never demanded by any of the preceding Princes, on Account of its Impoſſibility.

to Death, and to reflect, that he and his Relations were alſo in Danger, upon the ſame Account, he went to *Arioch*, the Captain of the King's Guards, to learn what Crime they were condemned for.

The Captain informed him, That the King had a Dream, which he himſelf had forgotten, and that they were to die, becauſe they could not tell him what it was.

Daniel made Anſwer, that if he could procure them a Reprieve for one Night only he would not deſpair of giving him the Satisfaction he required; for he had ſome Hope that God would that very Night be prevailed upon to enable him to do it.

The Captain gave the King an Account of this Propoſal; whereupon the Execution was reſpited, to try what Good was to be done upon that Experiment.

Daniel, with his Companions, went into his Bed-chamber, and ſpent that whole Night in Prayer to God, for the Means of reſolving the Queſtion, and for the delivering thoſe People from Death, that were now fallen under the King's Diſpleaſure, by laying before him the Particulars of the laſt Night's Dream, which was now out of his Memory.

God was pleaſed, upon the Interceſſion of *Daniel*, both in Compaſſion to the Miſerable, and out of Tenderneſs for the Prudence of *Daniel*'s Mediation, to make known, not only the Dream itſelf, but the Signification of it; to the End, that he might communicate the whole Matter to the King.

Daniel was ſo tranſported with this Revelation, that he got up early in the Morning, gave his Brethren a Word of Comfort, being now brought to the laſt Point of Deſpair, and thinking of nothing but Death, bad them take Courage, and hope the beſt, for that all Things were now ſecure.

When they had given God Thanks, together for his fatherly Care and Piety over them, *Daniel* went to *Arioch* by Break of Day, to carry him to the King, with Aſſurance he ſhould now have all the Particulars laid before him of his late Dream.

Upon *Daniel*'s Admittance to the King, he firſt informed him, "That "it was not Conceit he entertained "of his own Wiſdom, as if he knew "more than the *Chaldeans* and the "Magi; or any Deſign of a Re-"proach upon them, for not being "able to reſolve a Queſtion which "he could explain, that made him "engage in this Matter; for, ſaid "he, I am not a Perſon to pretend "to more Skill and Underſtanding "than my Neighbours, but it is "purely the Work of God, in Pity "to the Miſerable, and in Mercy to "my Prayers, for the Lives and "Safety of myſelf and my Friends, "that he hath revealed this Dream "to me, and laid open the Mean-"ing of it.

"I have not been ſo ſolicitous for "the Safety of myſelf, and my Com-"panions under your Diſpleaſure,

"as

" as for your Honour and Glory; in " caſe of putting ſo many good and " worthy Men to Death, contrary " to Right and Juſtice, merely for " not being able to do a Thing which " it is utterly impoſſible for Fleſh " and Blood to do; or for any but " a ſupernatural Power to accom- " pliſh.

" You were thinking with your- " ſelf what would become of the " Empire of the World when you " were gone, and who ſhould ſuc- " ceed to it. Now the Dream you " had was a Kind of a Reſolution " upon that Enquiry; for God " ſhewed you in your Sleep thoſe " that were to rule after you. You " dreamt you ſaw a large Image, or " Statue, ſtanding upright; the *(g)* " Head was Gold; the Shoulders " and Arms Silver; the Belly and " the Thighs Braſs; the Legs and " the Feet Iron. You ſaw then a " Stone broken off from a Moun- " tain that fell upon this Image, " overthrew it, and broke it ſo ſmall, " that the Duſt of the Gold, Silver, " Braſs, and Iron, was as light as " Chaff, and carried away by a " Blaſt of Wind to the furthermoſt " Parts of the Earth; the Stone " growing ſo large during this Time, " that it lay like a Mountain, on the " Face of the Earth. This was " your Dream, and I come now to " the Interpretation of it. By the " Golden Head is ſignified yourſelf, " and other Kings of *Babylon* before " you: The two Hands and Shoul- " ders portend that two Kings ſhall " deſtroy your Empire; and after- " ward, their Empire will be ſub- " verted by another King coming " from the Weſt in Armour of Braſs; " and he is to be ſubdued afterward " by another in Iron; which, in its " Nature, is ſtronger than Gold, Sil- " ver, or Braſs, and not to be re- " ſiſted."

Nebuchadnezzar with Aſtoniſhment acknowledged this to be his Dream, and falling upon his Face, adored *Daniel* like a God, and appointed divine Honours to be paid him: Nay, he was not ſatisfied without giving him the Name of God; he alſo made him Ruler over the whole Province, joining ſeveral of his Kindred with him in the ſame Commiſſion. This Promotion was followed with ſuch Envy upon *Daniel* and his Relations, that it had like to have coſt them all their Lives by a

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(g) Head was Gold. It is not a little remarkable, with how much Clearneſs and Perſpicuity the Prophet here deſcribes the Properties of which the Image was compoſed, and the Reference it bore to the four moſt celebrated Empires that ever were erected.

By the Golden Head is to be underſtood *Babylon*, which hath been arrived at the Summit of its Splendor and Glory.

By the Silver Breaſt and Arms, the *Perſian* Monarchy, as the next in Greatneſs and Power at that Time.

And the Thighs of Braſs, *&c.* may not improperly be ſuppoſed to relate to the Strength of the *Macedonian* and *Roman* Empire, and declarative of that amazing Rapidity with which they ſubdued other Nations; as Braſs and Iron are Emblems of Strength and Force, and frequently made uſe of in that Senſe by the Prophets.

Diſguſt the King took upon the following Occaſion.

He had cauſed to be made an *(h)* Image of Gold, ſixty Cubits in Height, and ſix in Breadth, and placed it in the great Plain of *Babylon*. He called together, upon the Dedication of it, the Princes, the great Men and Officers out of all his Dominions; making Proclamation, that immediately upon hearing the ſound of a Trumpet, they ſhould all fall down *(i)* to worſhip his Image; and that whoever refuſed it, ſhould be caſt into the fiery Furnace. Upon the ſounding of this Trumpet, all the People fell down and worſhipped, except *Daniel* and his Relations; who refuſing to do it, from a Reverence to the Laws of their Country, and the Religion of the true God, were informed againſt, and caſt into the Fire; but by a merciful Providence, and beyond all human Imagination, their Lives were preſerved, as if the Flame itſelf had been conſcious of the Injuſtice of the Sentence, and ſuſpended its natural Effect in Favour of the Innocent; for they were not ſo much as ſcorched with it.

This extraordinary Interpoſition of Divine Providence in their Behalf, enhanced them greatly in the Eſteem of the King, who afterwards conferred on them many ſignal Tokens of his Favours.

Soon after this amazing Event, *Nebuchadnezzar* had another Dream, as ſurpriſing as the former; which was, that "Being driven away from his "Kingdom, he lived ſeven Years a-"mongſt the Beaſts of the Foreſt, "and was afterwards reſtored to his "former State and Dignity."

The King put the Queſtion again to the Magi upon this Viſion alſo; but *Daniel* was the only Perſon again who could expound it: And according to his Prediction, it ſucceeded

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(h) Image of Gold. Notwithſtanding the *Babyloniſh* Monarch had entertained a high Opinion of *Daniel*'s Wiſdom, and the Greatneſs of his God, yet he was too much attached to his own Syſtem of Worſhip to be regulated by the Prophet's moſt earneſt Advice to forſake it.

In this Place he erects a Statue in Honour of the guardian Deity of the Nation, named *Bel*; from which he thought proper to ſtile *Daniel Belteſhazzar*, as ſuppoſing him to border near upon Divinity, and to have a Degree of Divinity only inferior to that God.

Diodorus Siculus ſpeaking of the amazing Plunder which *Xerxes* found in the Temple of this Idol, after the Conqueſt of *Babylon*, mentions a Statue of ſolid Gold, forty Feet high, which the Generality of Commentators ſuppoſe to be this very Image.

(i) Worſhip this Image. When we conſider the Strictneſs obſerved even in the ſuperſtitious Worſhip of the Ancients, and the Puniſhments decreed for the leaſt Inattention to it, we have a melancholy Retroſpect to make upon our own Times, where, though we have been ſo highly bleſſed with the Benefits of the Goſpel, we not only act in manifeſt Contradiction to its Tenets, but preſume to ridicule, controvert, and deſpiſe them.

The Merits of a ſuffering Saviour are treated with Contempt, and his very Exiſtence diſputed by ſome Members of his Church, who ſhould be the firſt, from the Nature of their Office, to adore his Miſſion, and propagate his Laws.

SHADRACH MESHACH & ABEDNEGO, Dan.l III, 25.

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in the Event; for "After ſeven "Years of his Life ſpent in an in- "ſociable Solitude, without any Per- "ſon's daring to make any Attempt "upon his Government, God, by "his Prayers, was prevailed upon to "re-inſtate him in the Exerciſe of "his kingly Power."

This King appears from a Review of his Life to have been an active Prince, and much more fortunate than any of his Anceſtors. He died in the three and fortieth Year of his Age. *Beroſus*, in the third Book of his *Chaldean* Hiſtory, makes mention of it in theſe Words:

"*Nebuchodonoſor* the Father, un- "derſtanding that a certain great "Officer of his, to whom he had "committed the Government of "*Egypt*, *Cæle-Syria*, and *Phænicia*, "was fallen off from his Allegiance, "and not being in a Condition of "Body himſelf to bear the Fatigues "of the War in his own Perſon, "he ſent his Son *Nebuchodonoſor*, "with Part of his Army, to reduce "him to his Obedience. He found "him out; fought and overcame "him, and ſo reduced the revolted "Provinces to their Duty. The "Father in the mean Time was "taken away by a Sickneſs at *Ba-* "*bylon*, in the one and twentieth "Year of his Reign. The young "Prince was no ſooner informed of "the Death of his Father, but he "took immediate Care for the ſet- "tling of his Affairs in *Egypt*, and "the reſt of the Provinces; recom- "mending to ſome particular Friends "the Charge of conveying his Pri- "ſoners, *Jews*, *Syrians*, *Phœnici-* "*ans*, and *Egyptians*, to *Babylon*, "with the Army and Baggage; "while he himſelf, with a ſmall "Retinue, took his Way thither "over the Deſart. The Govern- "ment was reſerved for him in the "mean while, by the *Chaldeans*; "and by the great Men among "them, in his Abſence, ſecured till "his Return. So that when he "came to enter upon the Admini- "ſtration, he was eſtabliſhed in the "full Poſſeſſion of his paternal Em- "pire. The firſt Thing he did was "to make a commodious Diſtribu- "tion of his Captives into Colonies; "and after that, to adorn and illuſ- "trate the Temple of *Belus*, and "other religious Places, with the "Spoils of War. He repaired and "enlarged the ancient Edifices of the "City, and raiſed Works upon the "Banks of the River, to prevent all "Approaches that Way. He erect- "ed three Walls or Retrenchments, "within the Bounds of the City, "and as many without, all Brick "Work; and when he had fortified "the Town after this remarkable "Manner, he beautified the Gates "with a curious Frontiſpiece, like "the finiſhing of the Temple Work; "and erected another Palace conti- "guous to that of his Father, with "great Art and Magnificence. In "this Building there were vaſt Stones "ſupported upon Arches, that look- "ed like Mountains hanging in the "Air; and they were planted on the "Top with ſeveral Sorts of Trees, "in a Compliment to the Queen,

"who

" who being a *Medean*, had a paſ-
" ſionate Deſire to ſee ſome artificial
" Reſemblance of the Gardens and
" Rarities of her own Country.

Megaſthenes, in the fourth Volume of his Hiſtory of *India*, ſpeaks of theſe Garden Works, and ſets forth this King, both for his Enterprize, and his Performance, to have been much ſuperior to *Hercules* himſelf, having ſubdued the greateſt Part of *Libya*, and likewiſe *Iberia*. *Diocles* makes mention of this King in the ſecond Book of his *Perſian* Hiſtory; and *Philoſtratus*, in the Account he gives of the *Phœnicians* and the *Indians*; writes, that this Prince, in the Days of *Ithobal* King of *Tyre*, maintained a Siege thirteen Years againſt that Town.

CHAP. IV.

Nebuchadnezzar's *Succeſſor releaſes King* Jehoiachim. Babylon *is beſieged by* Cyrus *and* Darius. Daniel *expounds a Viſion to King* Belſhazzar. *Taking of* Babylon. Daniel *obtains the Favour of* Darius. *God works many Deliverances for the Prophet, and enables him to perform many Wonders.*

EVIL-MERODACH, who ſucceeded to the Throne of *Babylon*, on the Demiſe of *Nebuchadnezzar* his Father, immediately on his Acceſſion releaſed *Jehoiachim*, honoured him with many Preſents, took him into his Confidence, and made him the chief Governor of his Palace. His Father indeed had broken his Faith ſhamefully with this Prince, in making him a Priſoner after he had ſo frankly delivered up himſelf, his Wife, Children, and all his Relations, upon Honour only, for the ſaving of his Country from utter Ruin.

Evil-Merodach died in the eighteenth Year of his Reign. His Son *Nigliſar* ſucceeded him; and when he had reigned forty Years, the Kingdom fell by Succeſſion to his Son *Laboſardochus*, who kept it only nine Months; and after his Death, it devolved on *Belſhazzar*, by the *Babylonians* called *Naboandel*.

Cyrus the King of the *Perſians*, and *Darius* the King of the *Medes*, made War upon this Prince; and while they lay before *Babylon*, there appeared to *Belſhazzar* an extraordinary Viſion. As he was at Supper, with his Courtiers and Concubines about him, together with all the ſplendid Apparatus of a princely Table, he called, in a Frolick, for the ſacred Veſſels out of his own Temple, which *Nebuchadnezzar* depoſited there, upon rifling the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, though he never had put them to any prophane or private Uſe.

Belſhazzar was now warm in his Cups, and entertaining himſelf and his Company, with prophane Speeches againſt the Majeſty of the true God; when in the Height of his Jolity there appeared a Hand, writing certain Syllables upon the Wall; which put the King into ſuch Terror, that he immediatly called a Council of

of cunning Men and *Chaldeans*, and all Sorts of Diviners, (who among thoſe Babarians value themſelves upon a Faculty of diſcloſing the Meaning of Prodigies, and the Interpretation of Dreams,) to find out the Purport of the Words that were there written upon the Plaiſter. They laid their Heads together, and and after a long Conſultation, frankly declared they knew nothing of the Matter.

Upon this the King from his Anxiety, cauſed a Proclamation to be publiſhed all over his Dominions, with Promiſe of a Golden Chain, the Privilege of a Royal Purple Robe, and the third Place of Rule in his Kingdom, to any Man that ſhould give him the Interpretation of that Writing. In Conſequence of this Proclamation, the Wiſe Men aſſembled, and exerted their utmoſt Efforts to obtain the proffered Reward, without the leaſt Degree of Succeſs.

While the King was under the greateſt Anxiety concerning this perplexing Circumſtance; the Queen informed him for his Comfort, that there was a certain *Jew* among the Priſoners that *Nebuchadnezzar* had brought away with him upon the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, who was deemed a Man of great Wiſdom, and ſo wonderfully ſkilled in ſolving of Difficulties and intricate Queſtions, that he appeared to be under the Direction of a divine Spirit.

She alſo told him that *Nebuchadnezzar* made uſe of him for his Interpreter in the like Caſes; when no one elſe was able to reſolve him; wherefore ſhe deſired the King by all Means to ſend for *Daniel*, enquire of him about that Writing, and give him Encouragement to ſpeak the Truth, though it ſhould portend ſomething dreadful to himſelf.

Upon this Advice *Belſhazzar* cauſed *Daniel* to be ſent for; profeſſing indeed, that he had heard of the Penetration and Underſtanding of that Man, and of the Spirit of Divination with which he was poſſeſſed; and that he took him to be the moſt likely Perſon in the World to divine the Truth of a Matter which no Body elſe could interpret.

Upon *Daniel*'s being brought, the King put him the Queſtion, with an Aſſurance, that all the Promiſes in his Proclamation ſhould be made good to him, upon his Solution of it; which would make him famous all over the World, wherever it ſhould be known, that he had theſe Honours done him for his Wiſdom.

Daniel excuſed himſelf from the receiving any *(k)* Gifts or Honours. *For Wiſdom*, ſays he, *is a divine Fa-*

(k) Gifts or Honours. Here is a Scripture and glorious Inſtance of the Meanneſs of Bribery and Corruption.

Here was none of *Balaam*'s Spirit; on going to Court and humouring and gratifying a Prince's Paſſion, or coming into his wicked Policies for Gifts and Promotion.

Daniel ſerved him diſintereſtedly, and in the Courſe of his Service, his Eyes not being blinded with Gifts, he faithfully and courageouſly, and honeſtly pointed out to him the Faults he ſaw in his Conduct, and what were the Occaſion of his approaching, as of his Predeceſſor's Misfortunes.

oulty, and not to be corrupted or prophaned with Bribes, but be ever ready to ſerve thoſe that ſtand in Need of it.

This Writing foretells that your Death is at Hand; for you ſhould have taken Warning by the Judgments that befel your great Anceſtor, for his Contempt of God, and have applied yourſelf to a religious Courſe of Life.

You know well, continued he, *that* Nebuchadnezzar *was baniſhed the Society of Mankind, and condemned to the Condition of a Beaſt; but that afterwards it pleaſed God, upon his earneſt Prayers and Repentance, to reſtore him to the Converſation of Men, and to the Exerciſe of his former Government, which thro' the infinite Mercy and Providence of God he adored and celebrated afterward all the Days of his Life.*

But for your Part, you are ſo far from being wrought upon by this Example in your Family, that you blaſpheme God to his Face, and take a Pride in prophaning the Veſſels of his holy Altar, in your Debauches with your Harlots.

By this lewd Courſe of Impiety, you have drawn the Wrath of God upon your Head; and the Intent of this Writing is only to ſhew what you are to come to.

Mene, *which is as much as Number, ſignifies, that the Days both of your Life and of your Reign are numbered; and that you have but a ſhort Time to live.*

Tekel, *or Weight, gives you to underſtand, that your Reign is weighed in the Balance, and drawing to a Concluſion.*

Peres, *or a Fragment, portends, that your Kingdom ſhall be divided, and given to the* Medes *and* Perſians.

The King was moſt terribly mortified with this Interpretation; yet notwithſtanding he was ſo juſt and generous, as to make good to *Daniel* all that he had promiſed him, tho' the Foreteller of his Ruin; conſidering with himſelf, that it was not the Prophet's Fault, but his own unhappy Lot, that he could tell him no better Tidings; neither could he deny but that *Daniel* had acted the Part of a juſt and a good Man, in letting him know the Truth of Things, tho' deplorable in the Event.

Soon after the Prophet's Interpretation, both himſelf and the City fell into the Power of *Cyrus*; for *Babylon* was taken in the ſeventeenth Year of the Reign of *Belſhazzar*, who is ſaid to have been the laſt King of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Family.

Darius was ſixty-two Years of Age, when, with the Aſſiſtance of *Cyrus*, his Kinſman, he effected the Subverſion of the *Babylonian* Empire.

This *Cyrus* was the Son of *Aſtyages*, though known among the *Greeks* by another Name. He took the Prophet *Daniel* with him into *Media*, and held him in great Eſtimation; for he made him one of the three chief Governors, that had three hundred and ſixty more under them, according to the original Conſtitution of *Darius*.

Darius had ſo great a Reverence for *Daniel*, that he conſulted him upon

upon all Occaſions, an Oracle, and would hardly reſolve upon any Matter of Moment without his Advice. But it fell out with *Daniel*, as we find it in the Caſe of other Princes Favourites; the Confidant that is moſt in Credit, never fails of drawing upon himſelf the Envy of all the reſt.

Daniel was ſo well aware of theſe Court Stratagems, and kept ſo ſtrict a Guard upon himſelf, that there was no laying hold of any Opportunity againſt him.

As to Bribes, he had a Soul ſo much above any Temptation of that Kind, that he made Conſcience of receiving even a lawful Acknowledgement for a good Office. But this did not hinder his Enemies from plotting his Deſtruction, which they endeavoured to effect in the following Manner.

Having obſerved that *Daniel* prayed to God conſtantly thrice a Day, his Adverſaries ſtudied how they ſhould avail themſelves of this pious Practice to his Ruin. They applied themſelves to *Darius*, in the Name of his Council and State Officers; and requeſted that he would be pleaſed ſo far to indulge his People, as to paſs an Edict only for thirty Days, That whoſoever ſhould preſume to aſk any Thing of God or Man, within that Compaſs of Time, ſhould be caſt into the Lions Den.

The King was ſo ſhort-ſighted, as not to ſee through the Malice of this Contrivance; and that the very Propoſal ſtruck at the Life of *Daniel*: ſo that he aſſented to the Motion, promiſed a Confirmation of it, and ordered the Publication of the Decree, as an Act paſſed by himſelf and his Council.

This Decree ſo ſevere and peremptory, greatly alarmed the People, who all deſiſted, even from the Duties they owed their God. But *Daniel*, regardleſs of all that Man could do, continued the regular Exerciſe of his Devotion, and ſubmitted the Event to the Pleaſure and Direction of an All-Wiſe Providence.

This Way of proceeding furniſhed his Enemies with a Pretence that they long waited for; therefore immediately they informed the King, that *Daniel* was the only Man, who in Contempt of his Royal Proclamation, worſhipping contrary to the Tenor and Direction of the Decree, and that he did not do this out of Piety, but from a Spirit of Contradiction and Defiance to the Authority of the Edict.

The Envy of *Daniel*'s Enemies was the more outrageous, upon the Apprehenſion that they had the King's perſonal Reſpect for him, might incline him to paſs over the Affront; ſo they preſſed him with Clamours and Outcries, not to be reſiſted, for Juſtice upon the Malefactor; nay, they inſiſted, that they ſhould be immediately thrown into the Lions Den.

Darius was forced to yield to the Violence of theſe Importunities. But told *Daniel* for his Comfort in this Ex-

Extremity, that rather than ſo good a Man ſhould periſh, God would yet work ſome Miracle for his Relief. So *Daniel* was caſt into the Lions Den, and a great Stone laid at the Mouth of it, which the King *(l)* ſealed with his own Signet, and returned to his Palace.

He paſſed that Night, faſting and waking; for his anxious Concern for *Daniel* would not ſuffer him either to eat or ſleep; but early in the Morning he aroſe and went to the Den, where he found every Thing as he had left it, and the Seal untouched.

He then called upon *Daniel* by his Name, at a Grate that looked down into the Den, to know if he were living; to whom he made Anſwer, That he was ſafe and well.

Then the King immediately ordered him to be taken out. But his inveterate Enemies inſiſted on his Continuance in the Den. However it was ordered by Divine Providence, that he received not the leaſt Hurt.

The King was ſo incenſed at the Malignity of thoſe People, that he ordered as much Meat to be given the Lions as they could devour; and when they would eat no longer, to turn *(m) Daniel's* Accuſers in among them, obſerving, that if they did not devour them, it would be becauſe their Bellies were full. But if they did, it muſt be allowed to be the immediate Hand of God that preſerved *Daniel*.

In fine, the Lions tore them in Pieces in an Inſtant, and with as much Eagerneſs as if they had been ſtarved with Hunger; or rather, as if the Beaſt themſelves were become the Miniſters of God's Juſtice upon thoſe Workers of Iniquity.

Having thus made the Enemies of *Daniel* a dreadful Example to others, *Darius* publiſhed a Decree through his whole Empire, commanding his People, to acknowledge the God of *Daniel*, to be the only true and Almighty God; and at the ſame Time multiplied Honours upon the Prophet himſelf, in preference to all the reſt of his Friends and Favourites.

Daniel, by this Conduct, having gained the univerſal Eſteem as a Per-

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(l) Sealed with his own Signet. *Darius*, in all probability, at the Time of ſigning this Decree, either forgot that he expoſed his Favourite, *Daniel*, to the Machinations of his Enemies, or was ignorant of his religious Principles; for it is ſcarcely to be ſuppoſed he would have conſented to any Thing prejudicial to the Intereſt of a Man for whom he entertained ſo perfect a Friendſhip and Eſteem.

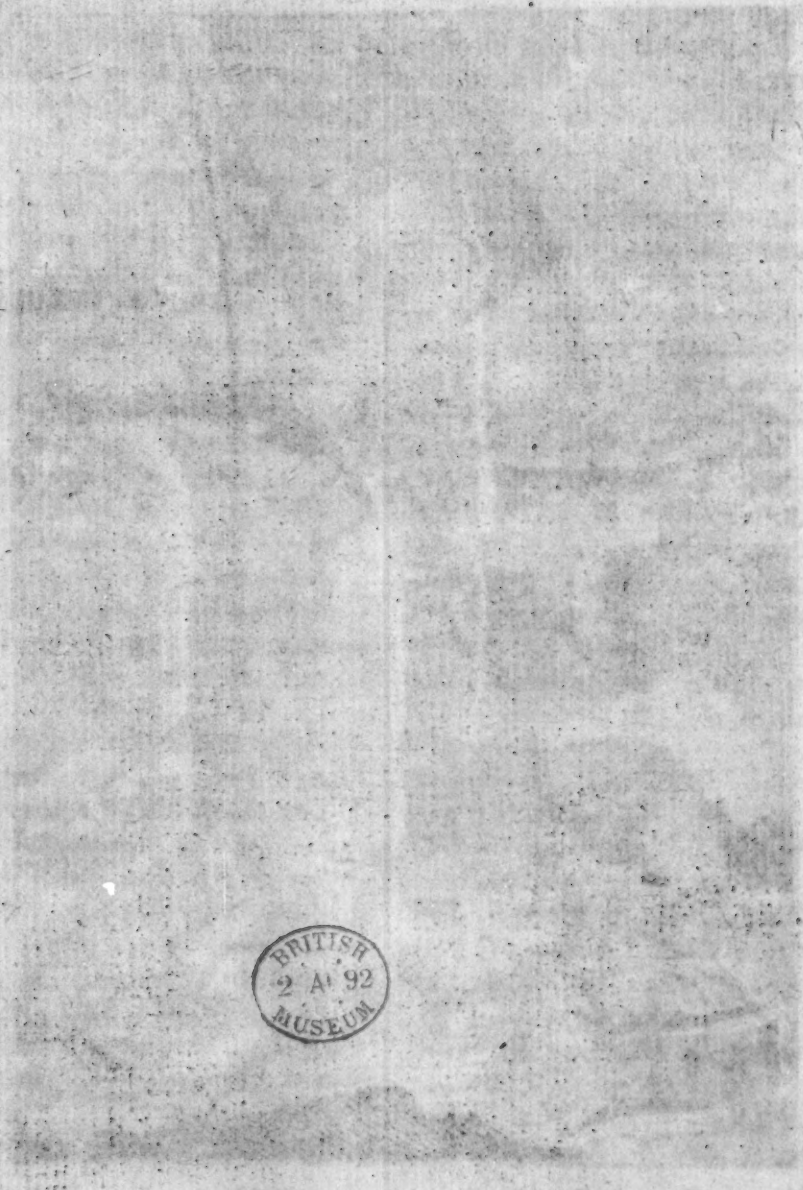
(m) Daniel's Accuſers in among them. The Ancients were remarkably rigid in their Puniſhments, and condemned the near Relations of any Criminal to Death, from a Notion that ſo extraordinary a Degree of Severity might reſtrain the Commiſſion of Offences, ſince few would be ready to undertake any Action that would expoſe their Families to Ruin, however regardleſs they might be of themſelves.

This cruel Law had been aboliſhed amongſt the *Jews* in the Time of *Moſes*, who decreed that the Puniſhment of Tranſgreſſions ſhould be entirely confined to the Offender.

* This

DANIEL *in the* LIONS DEN.

Dan. Ch. VI. V. 20.



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ſon highly in Favour both with God and Man; he erected a ſtately Fabrick at *Ecbatan*, the Capital of *Media*; a Work remarkable for its Beauty and Magnificence*.

There are other Paſſages in the Hiſtory of *Daniel*, which are yet more admirable and particular, and demand peculiar Attention. He had this ſingular Bleſſing attending him, beſide his excellent Gift of Prophecy, that he lived in a high Degree of Reputation, both with King and People; and at his Death left a Character that reflects everlaſting Honour on his Memory; for we find by his Writings, God communed with him in a very expreſs Manner, and revealed to him not only the Sum and Subſtance of Things to come, (as was uſual to other Prophets,) but the very Time when ſuch or ſuch an Event ſhould come to paſs.

And whereas other Prophets were more exerciſed in the foreboding of Calamities, and conſequently drew upon themſelves Envy and Ill-Will, both from Princes and People, *Daniel* conciliated the Eſteem of both, made Friends of both, by the good Things he told them, when they took Delight to hear; and then as to the Certainty of the Event, all are agreed, that he ſpoke from the Dictate of an infallible Spirit, as may be abundantly gathered alſo from the Writings which this great Prophet had left behind him.

To juſtify this Obſervation we cite the Particulars of a Viſion, as related by himſelf. *It fell out, as I was taking the Air one Day, with ſome of my Companions at* Suſa, *the Metropolis of* Perſia, *that we were ſurprized all on a ſudden with an Earthquake. My Friends ran away in a Fright, and left me alone, fallen proſtrate upon the Ground, in Conſternation and Amazement.*

While I was in that Poſture, ſome Body, methought, came, took hold on me, bad me riſe, and take good Notice of Things; for I ſhould ſee wonderful Revolutions that would befal my Countrymen ſeveral Ages to come.

Upon my ariſing, I ſaw a large Ram, with ſeveral Horns, and the laſt taller than the reſt. Turning my Face then toward the Weſt, I ſaw a Goat that paſſed through the Air, and encountered the Ram, ſtruck him down twice, and trampled him under his Feet.

After this there aroſe a large Horn out of the Forehead of the Goat; and when it was broken, there ſprung up four more inſtead of it, pointing toward the four Quarters of the Heavens.

Daniel writes alſo, *That from one of them came forth a little Horn, which growing up, ſhould wage War with the Nation of the* Jews, *and deſtroy* Jeruſalem *itſelf, ſuppreſs the Ceremo-*

* This Tower is famous for being the royal Monument of the Kings of the *Medes*, *Perſians*, and *Parthians*, to which Uſe it is ſtill applied, and the Place likewiſe committed to the Cuſtody of a *Jewiſh* Prieſt to this very Day.

nies of the Temple, and all Sacrifices, for the Space of twelve hundred and ninety ſix Days.

This was the Viſion that, as *Daniel* writes, he ſaw at *Suſa*, which was firſt ſhewed by a Revelation from God, and then interpreted after this following Manner:

By the Ram was deſigned the Kingdoms of the Medes *and* Perſians; *by the Horns, the ſucceeding Kings that ſhould rule over thoſe People, and the laſt of their Kings, by the laſt Horn, as tranſcending all the reſt in Wealth and Power; by the Goat was ſignified ſome King of* Greece, *that ſhould twice totally defeat the* Perſians, *and ſubdue that Empire; by the great Horn upon the Forehead of the Goat, was meant the firſt of their Kings; and by the budding out of four Horns more, pointing to the four Winds, were to be underſtood the Succeſſors to thoſe Kings, and the Partition of their Dominions, after the Death of the firſt, though Strangers to the Blood; but that however they ſhould reign for ſeveral Years; and in proceſs of Time, out of theſe ſhould come a King that would make War upon the* Jewiſh *Nation, and utterly extinguiſh the Form of the Commonwealth, pillage the Temple, and prohibit any Sacrifices or Worſhip in it for three Years.*

This Prediction was verified under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, according to the exact Manner in which the Prophet foretold every minute Circumſtance. He wrote ſeveral wonderful Things alſo about the *Roman* Empire, and eſpecially of the Deſolation they ſhould make of the *Iſraelites*; all which he received by divine Revelation, and tranſmitted in writing to Poſterity, to ſtand as a Teſtimony upon record, of the Agreement betwixt the Preſage and the Event.

The exact Fulfillment of the Predictions of the Prophets is an irrefragable Argument of the Super-intendance of a Divine Providence over Human Affairs, and refutes that Syſtem which blindly as well as impiouſly inculcates, that the whole Courſe of ſublunary Events is a meer Huddle of Contingency, without any primary effective Cauſe. The Diſtance of Time alſo from the Predictions in general to their Completion, plainly indicates that they could not be fabulous or caſual, and demonſtrates that they were truly delivered as inſpired by the moſt inſtitutive Knowledge and unerring Wiſdom.

CHAP. V.

The Reſtoration of the Jews *from the* Babyloniſh *Captivity. Proclamation of* Cyrus *to rebuild the Temple.* Artaxerxes *puts a ſtop to that pious Work. Dies ſoon after. The* Magi *rule for the Space of one Year, after which* Darius *is choſen King. Permits the Continuance of the Building, and promotes the Deſign againſt the Oppoſition of the* Samaritans.

IN the firſt Year of *Cyrus*, and the ſeventieth of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity

tivity, it pleaſed God, in Compaſſion to a wretched People, according to what he had foretold them by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; that is to ſay, that after ſeventy Years Bondage under *Nebuchadnezzar*, and his Succeſſors, that they ſhould be reſtored to their own Country; ſee the Temple rebuilt, and return to their former State of Eminence and Grandeur.

This was accordingly effected; for God put it into the Heart of *Cyrus*, to ſend his circular Letters over all *Aſia*, to this Effect, ſigning them, *Cyrus*, the King.

I do fully perſuade myſelf, that the great God, of whoſe Gift and Bounty I hold my Empire, is the very God that the Children of Iſrael *adore; for I find honourable Mention made of my Name by his Prophets of ancient Date, as a Perſon that in Time to come ſhould rebuild* Jeruſalem, *and re-inſtate the People.*

Cyrus, it ſeems, had ſeen and read the Prophecies of *Iſaiah*, which bore Date two hundred and ten Years before he was born, wherein he gives an Account of a Revelation he had from God, *That he would raiſe up one* Cyrus, *to be a King of many, and of powerful Nations, who ſhould re-eſtabliſh the* Hebrews *in their native Country.*

This was foretold by the Prophet a hundred and forty Years before the Temple was deſtroyed.

The King was ſo tranſported upon the reading of theſe divine Predictions concerning himſelf, that he immediately applied himſelf to the bringing about their Accompliſhment. To promote this pious Deſign, he called together all the leading Men of the *Jews* to *Babylon*, where he told them that ſo many of them as were diſpoſed to return into their own Country, ſhould have free Paſſports, and Permiſſion to rebuild the Temple and the City of *Jeruſalem*, if they thought fit, as he made no Doubt but that God would bleſs them in the Undertaking, promiſing over and above, that he would ſend his Orders to all his Officers and Governors, bordering upon *Judea*, to furniſh them with Gold and Silver, for the Rebuilding of the Temple, and Beaſts for Sacrifices.

The moſt eminent of the two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, together with the Prieſts and Levites, immediately upon this Declaration, haſtened away toward *Jeruſalem*. But there were a great many, however, that choſe rather to ſtay in *Babylon*, than to quit their Poſſeſſions.

Upon their Arrival at *Jeruſalem*, all the King's Friends and Officers contributed largely and unanimouſly toward the great Work. Some gave Gold, others Silver, and ſome Cattle; others attended the Diſcharge of their Vows, and the Solemnity of Oblations, as if they were already entered upon the Buſineſs of re-erecting the City, and in the Exerciſe of their ancient Diſcipline.

Now *Cyrus* had ſent them from *Babylon* the holy Veſſels and Utenſils that *Nebuchadnezzar* had taken away

away from the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, which were delivered to *Mithredath*, the King's Treaſurer, and by him to be depoſited with *Sheſhbazzar* till the Temple ſhould be finiſhed, and then immediately to be put into the Hands of the Prieſts and Magiſtrates for the Uſe and Service of the Temple.

Cyrus, after this, wrote another Letter to the Governor of *Syria*, in the following Manner.

Cyrus *the King, to* Syſina *and* Sarabaſan, *greeting.*

BE it known unto you, that I have given Leave to all the Jews that are in my Dominions, to return into their own Country, and there to rebuild their capital City, with the holy Temple at Jeruſalem, *in the ſame Place where it ſtood before.*

I have likewiſe ſent my Treaſurer, Mithredath, *and* Zorobabel, *the Governor of* Judea, *to ſuperintend the Building, and to ſee it raiſed ſix hundred Cubits upwards from the Ground, and as many over. The Walls to be three Rows of poliſhed Stone, and one of the Wood of the Country, together with an Altar for the Sacrifices; and all this to be done at my own Charge.*

I have alſo appointed my own Treaſurer Mithredath, *and* Zorobabel, *the Prince of* Judea, *to cauſe all Utenſils and Veſſels that* Nebuchadnezzar *carried away from the Temple at* Jeruſalem, *to be ſent back, and reſtored. That is to ſay, Fifty Golden Ewers, and four hundred Silver ones. Fifty Golden Veſſels, and four hundred Silver ones. Fifty Golden Lavers, and five hundred Silver ones. Thirty Golden Chalices, and three hundred Silver ones. Thirty Golden Phials, and two thouſand four hundred Silver ones. Beſides a thouſand of other large Veſſels of different Sorts.*

It is my further Pleaſure alſo, that they receive entire to themſelves all the Profits and Revenues that were formerly enjoyed by their Predeceſſors; and that they have an Allowance paid them of two hundred and fifty thouſand five hundred Drachma's, in Conſideration of Beaſts for Sacrifices, Wine and Oil; and two thouſand five hundred Meaſures of Wheat, in lieu of the fine Flour. And all this to be raiſed upon the Tribute of Samaria.

The Prieſts alone are to offer up the Sacrifices according to the Laws and Ceremonies of Moſes; *and to pray daily for the King and the Royal Family, and for the Welfare and Happineſs of the* Perſian *Empire.*

Let no Man preſume to do any Thing contrary to the Tenor of this my Royal Will and Proclamation, upon Pain of forfeiting Life and Eſtate.

This was the Subſtance of the King's Letter. And the Number of thoſe that returned out of Captivity to *Jeruſalem*, upon this Encouragement and Invitation, was forty two thouſand four hundred and ſixty two Perſons.

The Jews, upon their Return from Captivity, had no ſooner entered upon the grateful, though arduous Employ

Employ, of Rebuilding the Temple, than the Neighbouring Nations, and eſpecially the *Chuthites*, which *Shalmanezer*, the King of *Aſſyria*, had formerly tranſplanted from *Perſia* to *Medea* into *Samaria*, after he had removed the *Iſraelites* into other Habitations, applied themſelves to the Princes and Governors, to whom the Care of this Enterprize was committed, preſſing them with great Importunity, not to ſuffer the Jews, upon any Terms to proceed upon the Project of Rebuilding the City and Temple.

Theſe Commiſſioners were prevailed upon, by Bribes and fair Words, to ſlacken their Diligence in the Diſpatch and Proſecution of their Orders; and during the Courſe of this Delay, *Cyrus* was ſo taken up in War with the *Maſſagetes* (where he loſt his Life) that he could not attend to the Execution of the Work, that he knew nothing at all of the Matter.

Upon the Death of *Cyrus*, *Artaxerxes* ſucceeded to the Empire, and had an Addreſs preſented him from *Syria* and *Phœnice*, and from the *Ammonites*, *Moabites* and *Samaritans*. The Tenor of it was as follows.

This is to give you, great Sir, to underſtand, that the Jews who were carried away to Babylon, *are now returned to their former Seats, and into our Country, where they are buſy upon the Rebuilding of a City that was moſt deſervedly deſtroyed for ſeditious Practices.*

They are ſetting up Markets, and Places of Commerce; repairing the Walls, and renewing the Temple; and if they perſiſt in theſe Works, you may aſſure yourſelf, that they will never ſubmit to ſerve, if they once get it into their Power to command.

We account it our Duty, Sir, in this Heat and Zeal, for the Rebuilding of the Temple, to lay before you the true State of the Caſe, before it is too late.

Review the Hiſtory of your Predeceſſors, and you ſhall there find the Jews, from Generation to Generation, to be the Enemies of all crowned Heads; and that this very City was juſtly laid waſte and deſolate, for the Crime of Rebellion.

And we are further to lay before you, That it appears to us, from divers concurring Circumſtances, that if they are permitted to carry their preſent Deſigns into Execution, you will find your Communication cut off with Phœnice *and* Cœlo-Syria.

Artaxerxes, by Nature turbulent and impetuous, was incenſed beyond Degree, at theſe Repreſentations; and therefore returned the States the following Anſwer.

King Artaxerxes *to* Rathumus, *his Hiſtorygrapher*; Beeltethmus *and* Semellius, *the Scribe, and other Inhabitants of* Samaria *and* Phœnice, *greeting.*

UPON the Reading of your Letter of Addreſs, I have cauſed a diligent

ligent Search to be made into the Hiſtory of former Times, according to your Requeſt, and I find your Remarks upon the City of Jeruſalem *to be true, and the Jews have ever been a rebellious, and anti-monarchial Sort of People; turbulent and reſtleſs, and naturally addicted to Innovations.*

I find likewiſe, that their Kings have ever been fierce and violent, and extortionate in their Taxes and impoſitions, to the higheſt Degree of Oppreſſion, as Phœnice *and* Cœlo-Syria *may witneſs againſt them.*

Wherefore I do command you to oppoſe them with all your Might, in the Rebuilding of the City; for as they grow in Power, they will certainly increaſe in Malice, and behave themſelves as ſeditiouſly to the preſent Governors, as they have done in Times paſt to former Kings.

Rathumus and *Semellius*, the King's Scribes, had no ſooner read this Mandate, than they ſet out, with many others, for *Jeruſalem*; whither having arrived with the utmoſt Expedition, they put an abſolute Stop, both to the Rebuilding the City and the Temple; ſo that it was retarded from that Period, to the ſecond Year of *Darius*, the King of *Perſia*.

Artaxerxes, after he had reigned ſix Years, and ſubdued *Egypt*, died at *Damaſcus*, in his Return from that Expedition.

The Magi being cut off, in whoſe Hands, for a full Year after his Death, the Government reſted; it was afterwards tranſlated by the ſeven *Satrapæ*, or eminent Families of the *Perſians*, and by common Conſent conferred on *Darius*, the Son of *Hyſtaſpes*.

Darius, before he arrived at the regal Dignity, made a ſolemn Vow to the Lord, that if ever he came to the Throne, he would ſend all the holy Veſſels that were at *Babylon* to the Temple of *Jeruſalem*; and it happened about that Time, that *Zerubbable*, who was declared the Prince or Captain of the Jewiſh Captives, came from *Jeruſalem* to *Darius*.

Zerubbable was admitted into the King's peculiar Favour and Confidence, and together with two other great Officers, veſted with the higheſt Offices of State.

Darius, in the firſt Year of his Reign, gave a ſplendid and magnificent Entertainment, not only to his own Courtiers, but to the Princes and Nobility of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, the general Officers of all *India* and *Ethiopia*, and the Commanders, of a hundred and twenty ſeven Provinces.

Upon the breaking up of the Company, when the Entertainment was over, they retired, every Man to his own Quarter. And *Darius*, in the mean while finding, after a ſhort Slumber, that he could not compoſe himſelf, fell into Diſcourſe on different Topics, with his three favourite Officers, telling them in the End, *That he had ſome Queſtions to aſk them; and for their Encouragement, he that ſhould give him the moſt reaſonable and ſatisfactory Anſwer, ſhould*

ſhould have the Honour to be cloathed in Purple, drink in a Golden Cup, ſleep upon Gold, ride in a Chariot with Harneſs of Gold, wear a Silk Tiara, and a golden Chain; have the next Place to himſelf in Council, and be accounted as one of the Royal Blood.*

After this, he put his Queſtions to them in Order. To the firſt, If there was any Thing ſtronger than Wine? To the ſecond, the ſame Queſtion again, of the Strength of Kings? And to the third, what he thought of the Strength of Women? Or, finally, of Truth, perhaps, above all the reſt.

Upon the putting of theſe Queries to them, he left his Officers to conſider of the Matter.

Early in the Morning he called together all the Princes of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, with the chief Officers and Governors, placed himſelf upon the Seat of Juſtice, and cauſed the Guards of his Body to be ſent for immediately, to give their Opinions ſeverally and publickly upon what he had propoſed.

The firſt began upon the Subject of the Strength of Wine; thus addreſſing the Aſſembly.

I take upon me to pronounce Wine ſuperior to all other Powers whatſoever. For it overthrows the Minds and Underſtandings of all thoſe that drink too plentifully of it.

It puts the greateſt Prince into the Condition of a Child.

It ſets the Slave at Liberty, even to the forgetting of his Chains; and makes the Beggar as rich and as great as an Emperor.

It changes and elevates the Spirits, wherever it takes Poſſeſſion.

It enlivens the heavy Hearts of the Miſerable; pays all Debts; and relieves Men in all Manner of Neceſſities.

It makes the mean, puſillanimous Wretch, affect the Air of the Brave and Noble, without Reſpect to Things or Perſons.

It makes Men forget their moſt intimate Familiars and Friends, and ungratefully treat their neareſt Relations, as if they were the moſt hateful Strangers; and then when a Perſon has recovered from a Debauch, he remembers not what he did in the Heat of Liquor. For which Reaſon I cannot but look upon Wine as ſtrongeſt in its Effect.

When the firſt had finiſhed his Diſcuſſion of the Power of Wine; the ſecond ſtood up for the Power of Kings, in Preference to all other, which he endeavoured to prove after this Manner.

It is beyond Diſpute, that God has made Man Maſter of all Things under the Sun, ſo far as to command them, to make Uſe of them, and apply them to neceſſary Purpoſes of Life; but whereas Men have only a Dominion over other ſublunary Creatures, Kings have an Authority even over Men

* This was a rich Ornament for the Head, worn by Emperors, Kings, and great Perſonages among the Eaſtern People in former Times.

them-

themſelves, and a Right of ruling them, ſuperior to thoſe that are Maſters of all Things elſe, hath a juſt Title to Precedence, and to be accounted Supreme, having no Earthly Thing above him.

When Princes find it convenient to expoſe the Perſons of their Subjects to Wars and Dangers, they obey them, without any Reluctance, let the Hazard be what it will; whether Bodies to Bodies, or in the Attack of Walls or Works, forcing of Paſſes, or as it often happens, in contending with Nature itſelf. We ſee how frankly they offer themſelves either to kill or be killed, in the Execution of their Princely Orders; and then in Caſe of a Victory at laſt, the Honour and Profit of the Whole redounds to the King.

Thus much for the Military Part; and the ſame Reaſon holds good in the common Buſineſs of Life, whether the Countryman plows, ſows, digs and ſweats, to ſupply the King's Stores out of his Toil and Labour, or whatſoever he commands, it muſt be obeyed, without Expoſtulation or Delay.

The King, while the People are thus labouring for him, takes his Fill of every delicate Pleaſure, ſleeps in Security, with his Guards about him, under an indiſpenſable Obligation of the cloſeſt and moſt watchful Attendance; nor dares a Man amongſt them cloſe his Eyes while his Maſter is at Reſt; for the King's Buſineſs is theirs, without any Sort of Liberty to attend to any other; ſo that nothing certainly can be ſtronger than the Force of that Power which the whole Multitude obeys to all Intents and Purpoſes.

After this Declamation upon the Power of Kings, *Zerubbable* ſtood up in Vindication of Women and Truth, and thus enforced his Argument.

The Power of Wine is not to be denied, neither is that of Kings, that ties up ſo many Millions of Men in one common Bond of Allegiance; but the Super-Eminence of Women, notwithſtanding, exceeds all this; for the Mother of the King was before the King himſelf, and Kings are but the Gifts of the Women, who brought them into the World; and Women were likewiſe the Mothers and Nurſes of thoſe that cultivate our Vineyards, and dreſs our Vines.

There is not any Thing we can pretend to, but what we either directly or indirectly receive from them.

They have a Hand in the Government of our domeſtic Affairs; nay, in the Dreſs and Ornament of our Bodies; and, in fine, God hath made them ſo neceſſary to us, that we cannot live without them.

The Sight of a beautiful Woman conſtrains a Man to ſacrifice his Property, and his moſt darling Attachments to the Poſſeſſion of her Charms.

Women have the Power to make us abandon our very Country and Relations, and frequently to forget the beſt Friends we have in the World; and forſake every other Comfort, to live and die with them.

I may further add, that when we have compaſſed Sea and Land, for every Thing that is rich and curious in Nature. Do not we reſign all to the Diſpoſal of ſome Woman, who reigns

reigns ſole Miſtreſs of our Hearts? How have I ſeen a King, in the very Meridian of his Glory, ſubmit to the higheſt Indignity, from the Hand of his Concubine? Nor was this all, for ſhe would take the Crown from the King's Head, and ſet it upon her own; and he, weak Man, was ſo infatuated with her Beauty, as to condeſcend to any Foolery, in order to pleaſe her; or ſuffer himſelf to be treated juſt as her Caprice might direct.

The Princes and Nobility were not a little amazed at the Freedom uſed by *Zerubbabel* in Vindication of his Argument; however, he proceeded to the Diſcuſſion of the laſt Point, which was the Article of Truth.

I have delivered my Opinion upon the Subject of Women. But after all, neither they nor Kings are comparable to the irreſiſtable Force of Truth. For allowing the vaſt Magnitude of the Earth, the Heighth of the Heavens, and the unſpeakable Swiftneſs of the Motion of the Sun, and that all this is ordered by a Divine Hand, it muſt be granted withal, that God is juſt and true; and conſequently that Truth is of all Things imaginable the moſt powerful, ſince neither Error or Juſtice can prevail againſt it.

As for every thing elſe that paſſes for great in the World, they are mortal and ſhort-lived, but Truth alone is unchangeable and everlaſting; the Benefits we receive from it are ſubject to no Variations or Viciſſitudes of Time and Fortune, but righteous and warrantable, and without any Stain of Iniquity or Reproach.

Zerubbabel had the univerſal Acclamation of the Audience, for the excellent Things he delivered; and they all agreed with him, that Truth was incorruptible, and the only Bleſſing under the Sun that was not liable to Alteration and Decay; ſo that the King, as an Inſtance of his full Satisfaction in this Anſwer to the Queſtion, bad him take his Choice out of what he had promiſed him, and he would freely grant it him.

For ſays he, addreſſing himſelf to *Zerubbabel*, *You ſhall have the Preference in my Eſteem above all other Men, in Conſideration of the Superiority, of your Wiſdom and Underſtanding above that of your Companions. And from this Time forward, you ſhall have the firſt Place of Honour next to my own Perſon, and ſtand adopted into the Royal Family.*

Zerubbabel embraced this Opportunity to remind the King of a former Vow he had made; which was, that if he ever came to the Crown, he would immediately apply himſelf to the Rebuilding of *Jeruſalem*, and the holy Temple there, and order a Reſtitution to be made of all the ſacred Veſſels and Utenſils that *Nebuchadnezzar* had taken away from thence, and carried to *Babylon*.

Now, ſays he, *ſince your Majeſty has done me the Honour of reputing me a wiſe Man, and giving me the Preference on this Occaſion, my humble Requeſt is, That you will now diſcharge your Vow, and fulfil your Promiſe.*

The King, upon this Challenge, raiſed himſelf from his Throne, em-

braced his Adviſer, and diſpatched Mandates to his Governors and great Officers to conduct *Zerubbabel*, and thoſe to go along with him, to their Journey's End, and to aſſiſt him in the Rebuilding of the Temple.

He wrote Letters alſo to the Magiſtrates of *Phœnice* and *Syria*, to provide Carriages for the tranſporting of the Cedar to *Jeruſalem*, that was cut down in *Lebanon*, and to afford them all poſſible Aſſiſtance in their Undertaking.

The King likewiſe gave Charge to exempt all the Jews that ſhould now return out of this Captivity, from the Burden of any public Tax or Duty, and to leave them at Liberty in their Perſons, as well as in their Eſtates, without either Reſtraint or Tribute.

Alſo he commanded the *Edomites*, *Samaritans*, and the People of *Cælo-Syria*, to reſtore all thoſe Lands to the Jews that had been formerly in their Poſſeſſion, and to contribute fifty Talents over and above, toward the erecting of the Temple; and aſſigned them out of his own Bounty whatever ſhould be found neceſſary, either in ſacerdotal Habits or otherwiſe, for the due Regulation of every Part and Branch of that important Work.

He moreover aſſigned them Organs alſo to accompany the Voices of the Levites, and ordered a certain Proportion of Land for the Entertainment of the Officers and Keepers both of the City and the Temple, by Way of an Annual Penſion; confirming every Thing, in fine, that *Cyrus* had formerly reſolved upon the Reſtoration of the Jews, and their holy Veſſels.

Zerubbabel having thus obtained the Summit of his Wiſhes at the Hand of King *Darius*, he no ſooner had left his Preſence, than he addreſſed the Throne of Divine Grace, to return God unfeigned Thanks for the Honour he had received from the King, in the Reputation of his Wiſdom, beyond the reſt of his Competitors, which he acknowledged to be only the diſtinguiſhing Effect of his Goodneſs; concluding his Thankſgiving with a Prayer for the Succeſs of his Undertaking; and then went his Way to his Countrymen at *Babylon*, with the joyful News of their Deliverance.

Upon theſe Tidings they joined immediately in an univerſal Thankſgiving for the Promiſe of this Reſtoration to their native Country. And after the Solemnity was over, they devoted ſeven ſucceſſive Days to Feaſting, and indicated ſuch Tokens of general Joy, that the Day of their Redemption and Return, ſeemed as the firſt Day of a new Life to them.

The Heads of the Tribes made Choice of thoſe that were to go upon this Expedition, providing Horſes, and other Beaſts of Burden, and Carriages for their Wives and Children, and taking thoſe Troops along with them which *Darius* had appointed for a Convoy.

In this Manner they paſſed their Time chearfully upon the Way, with Pipes and Cymbals playing before them,

them, and the whole Multitude dancing and rejoicing after the Muſic.

There was a ſelect Number choſen out from every Tribe; but as the mentioning them ſingly, would rather tire than inſtruct the Reader, we ſhall only mention the diſtinct Tribes.

There were of the Tribe of *Judah* and *Benjamin* forty-two thouſand three hundred and ſixty.

After theſe came four thouſand and ſeventy Levites; and a promiſcuous Multitude of Women and Children, to the Number of forty thouſand ſeven hundred and forty-two.

Of the Stock of the Levites there were an hundred and twenty-eight Singers; a hundred and ten Porters. And of others that ſerved and aſſiſted in the Sanctuary, three hundred and twenty-two.

There were alſo ſix hundred and fifty-two, that called themſelves *Iſraelites*, but could not prove their Extraction.

There were others that had taken Wives, whoſe Genealogy could not be made out, either from the Levites or ſacerdotal Records; and theſe were accounted unqualified for the holy Function, to the Number of five hundred and twenty-five.

The Train of Servants that attended them was reckoned at ſeven thouſand three hundred and thirty-ſeven. Single Men and Women, two hundred and thirty-five. Camels, four hundred and thirty-five; and other Beaſts of Carriage, five hundred and twenty-five.

The Leader of this Multitude was *Zerubbabel*, the Son of *Shealtiel*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Race of *David*; and with him was *Jeſhua*, the Son of *Jozadak*, and *Mardochæus*, and *Serebæus*, which two were choſen to the Command by the Suffrage of the Tribes, and contributed, at their own Charge a hundred Pounds of Gold, and five thouſand Pounds of Silver, towards the Expence of this Expedition.

This was the Order and Manner of the March of the Prieſts and Levites, and that Part of the People that went along with them in their Return from *Babylon* to *Jeruſalem*, the reſt following after by Degrees, till in the End they all went back to their own Habitations.

In the ſeventh Month after their Departure from *Babylon*, *Jeſhua* the High Prieſt, and *Zerubbabel* their Prince, ſent Meſſengers throughout the Land, to ſummon the People to a general Meeting at *Jeruſalem*, in Conſequence of which they gathered together with great Chearfulneſs.

Upon this Meeting there was erected an Altar to ſacrifice upon, according to the Appointment of God by his Servant *Moſes*, and it was raiſed upon the ſame Place where it ſtood before. This Proceeding gave great Offence to the neighbouring Nations, who had a mortal Averſion, both to the People, and to whatever they did. It fell out juſt upon the Feaſt of Tabernacles, according to the Moſaical Inſtitution; after that came the daily Oblations, and the Sacrifice of the Sabbaths, and of the new Moons, and

and of all holy Feasts; all those that had made any Vow came likewise to perform it, from the first Day of the seventh Month.

They entered then upon the Building of the Temple, and expended vast Sums of Money upon Workmen and Builders of all Sorts; and upon Provisions, for those that assisted in the Carriage of Materials. The *Sidonians* contributed liberally towards this Work, bringing down Cedar-Trees in abundance from *Lebanon*, and framing them into Boats, which they brought into the Port of *Joppa*, as they had been ordered; first by *Cyrus*, and after him by *Darius*.

It was now the second Month of the second Year after the Return of the *Jews*, when the Foundations of the Temple being already laid, they began on the first Day of *December* with the Superstructure, committing the Care of the Building to the whole Family of the *Levites*, of twenty Years of Age and upward, and likewise to *Jeshua*, with his Sons and Brothers; and to *Kadmiel*, the Brother of *Judah*, and the Son of *Aminadab*, and to his Sons, who were all so diligent and industrious in the Discharge of their Commissions, that the Fabrick went forward beyond Expectation.

When they were advanced thus far, the Priests came and officiated in their Habits, with Musical Instruments; and the *Levites*, and the Sons of *Asaph*, sung some of the Hymns of *David* to the Honour of God, according to the first Institution. But the Priests and Levites, and the Elders of their Families who had seen the Glory and Magnificence of the former House, observing how inferior this was when compared with the other, broke out into Tears and Lamentations.

The common People however that had never seen the former, and consequently could not be troubled at the Disproportion, contented themselves with the present State of Things, though the Passion of the Priests and Elders was so great at the same Time, that their very Sighs and Cries were almost as loud as the Musick.

The Report of this Noise of Trumpets, with a confused Clamour and Mixture of Joy and Sorrow being brought to the *Samaritans*, they hastened in great Multitudes to learn the Cause of it; and finding that it was occasioned by the Return of the *Jews* from the Captivity at *Babylon*, and that they were now at work upon the rebuilding of their Temple, they went immediately to *Zerubbabel* and *Jeshua*, with the Chief of the Tribes, and desired that they themselves might likewise be admitted to assist in the Undertaking, upon Terms in common with the Rest. *For, said they, we worship the same God, value ourselves upon the Glory of the same Profession, and upon the Love and Practice of the same Religion, from the very Days of* Shalmanezer, *the King of* Assyria, *who transported us out of* Media, *into this Land.*

The Answer to the Request was, with one Voice, that they could not take them into a Partnership in the Building, because formerly *Cyrus*, and

and after his *Darius*, had aſſigned the Building of it to their particular Care; but that they ſhould have Liberty, if they thought fit, to Worſhip there, without Exception to any Man, and that it ſhould be open to all People indiferently, who were diſpoſed to ſerve God in it.

The *Chuthites* (for ſo where the *Samaritans* called) were ſo offended at this Refuſal, that they ſtirred up the *Syrians* to apply themſelves to the great Men as they did at firſt, under *Cyrus*, and afterward under *Artaxerxes*, that a Stop might be put to the Progreſs of the Building, by abating the Diligence of thoſe that were intruſted with the Diſpatch of the Work.

There went up to *Jeruſalem* at this Time, *Siſinnes*, the Governor of *Syria* and *Phœnice* and *Sathrabuzanes* with ſome others, and demanded of ſome of the principal Men, by what Authority this Temple was to be built, as it reſembled a Caſtle rather than a Temple, and to what End the Walls of the City were made ſo thick and ſtrong, and the Gates ſo fortified? *Zerubbabel* and *Jeſhua* made Anſwer, that they were the Servants of the moſt high God, to whoſe Honour this Temple was built, and to his Service it was dedicated by the greateſt, the happieſt, and the wiſeſt Prince that ever ſat upon that Throne, and that it had ſtood for many Ages, till in the End, for the Wickedneſs of their Foreſathers, the City, by God's Permiſſion, was taken, and deſtroyed by *Nebuchadnezzar* the King of *Babylon* and *Chaldea*, the Temple pillaged, and laid in Aſhes, and the People carried away captive into *Babylon*; but that when *Cyrus* came to the Government of *Perſia* and *Babylon*, he ordered by his Royal Proclamation the Rebuilding of the Temple, and reſtoring of all the Donations and Veſſels that had been taken by *Nebuchadnezzar*, which were delivered to *Zerubbabel*, and his Treaſurer, to be tranſported to *Jeruſalem*, and depoſited there again in the Temple; that by the Command of the ſame King, *Siſinnes* was ſent to that City to attempt the ſpeedy Execution of the Work; that upon Receipt of the King's Letters, he came in all Haſte, and immediately laid the Foundation; and that from that Time forward their Enemies had been ſtill endeavouring by all the Means their Malice could ſuggeſt to impede and obſtruct the Proſecution of their Deſigns. As by an Application to *Darius*, they might have been aſſured of the Truth of what they told them; and as they did not think it expedient to interrupt their Progreſs without the Knowledge of the King, they therefore agreed among themſelves to write to him immediately about this Matter. The *Jews* were not a little ſollicitous and apprehenſive, leſt the King, upon this Application, ſhould countermand the Orders he had given, till *Aggeus*, and *Zacharias*, two Prophets among them at that Time, bad them be of good Cheer, and fear nothing from the *Perſians*, for they were certainly informed of God's holy Will and Pleaſure touching that Affair. The People ſo abſolutely depended

pended upon this Encouragement, that they laboured more inceſſantly without the Intermiſſion ſo much as of one ſingle Day.

When the *Samaritans* had laid an Accuſation againſt the *Jews* before *Darius*, objecting againſt them the fortifying of the City, and the erecting of a ſtrong Place that looked more like a Citadel than a Temple, ſetting forth that this was not at all for the King's Service, and ſhewing alſo the Epiſtle of *Artaxerxes*, by which he had forbidden and hindered it before, as a Practice that was neither profitable nor ſafe for the Publick; when they had repreſented all this, and the King had received and conſidered of theſe Letters, he ordered the Royal Memorials to be conſulted upon this Subject; and upon the Search there was found at *Ecbatana*, a Caſtle in *Media*, a certain Book, wherein was written to this Effect:

It was ordained by King Cyrus, *in the firſt Year of his Reign, that the Temple of God ſhould be Rebuilt at* Jeruſalem, *ſixty Cubits in Height, and as many in Breadth, and the Altar in it; that there ſhould be in the Walls three Rows of poliſhed Marble, and one of Wood, of the Growth of the Country, and the Charge of it to be defrayed out of the King's Treaſury; that the holy Veſſels which* Nebuchadnezzar *had taken out of the Temple, ſhould be carried back to* Jeruſalem, *and reſtored; that the Superintendence of this Work ſhould be committed to* Siſinnes, *the Governor of* Syria *and* Phœnice, *and to his Companions, with Orders, not to appear at* Jeruſalem *themſelves, but to leave the Building of the Temple to the Jews, the Servants of God, and to the Chief of their Tribes; but to ſupply them, however, out of the Taxes upon the Province, and to furniſh them for their Sacrifices, with Bulls, Rams, &c. and whatever elſe the Prieſts ſhould deſire, who were to pray to God for the Welfare and Happineſs of the King of* Perſia, *and of his People, and that whoſoever ſhould preſume to act contrary to this Mandate, ſhould be forthwith taken and hanged up, and his Goods confiſcated, with the Addition of a Curſe over and above, that whoever ſhould dare to oppoſe or forbid the Progreſs of this Work, God would ſtrike him with a Vengeance as a Judgment upon him for his Iniquity.*

When *Darius*, upon a Search into the Tranſactions of *Cyrus*, had informed himſelf upon the Matter of Fact in Queſtion, he wrote back to *Siſinnes* and his Collegues, to this Effect:

King Darius *to* Siſinnes, *the Maſter of his Horſe; and to* Sathrabuzanes, *and the other Magiſtrates with him, greeting,*

"I Send you a Copy of *Cyrus*'s "Letter, tranſcribed out of his "Records, and it is my Will and "Pleaſure that all Things may be "done according to the Direction "of that Appointment. Fare you "well."

This

This Letter gave them to understand how the King ſtood diſpoſed; ſo that *Siſinnes*, and the Reſt, agreed among themſelves, to comply in all Reſpects with the King's Orders and Command; and undertaking the Care of the Fabrick, they aſſiſted the *Jews* and their Magiſtrates, and carried on the Work ſo unanimouſly, that the Building was erected according to the Command of *Cyrus* and *Darius*, and finiſhed within the Compaſs of ſeven Years; the Prophets *Aggeus* and *Zacharias*, in the mean Time propheſying.

In the ſixth Year of *Darius*, and three and twentieth Day of the eleventh Month, which the *Jews* called *Adar*, the *Macedonians*, the Prieſts and Levites, with the People of *Iſrael*, offered in Sacrifice, a hundred Bullocks, two hundred Rams, four hundred Lambs, and twelve Goats, as Sin-Offerings, for the twelve Tribes, in Acknowledgement of the Bleſſing of their Deliverance from Captivity, into their former State, and to his holy Worſhip in a new Temple.

The Prieſts and Levites had their Porters at every Gate, according to the Law, the Jews having built Galleries round about the Temple.

The Feaſt of Unleavened Bread was now drawing on, and in the firſt Month which the *Macedonians* called *Xanthicus*, and the Jews *Niſan*, the People flocked from all Places to the City, where they celebrated that Feſtival, together with their Wives and Children, after the Practice of their Forefathers, with all the Solemnity uſual on the Occaſion.

Upon the fourteenth Day of the firſt Month, they had the Paſſover, and kept together rejoicing for ſeven Days after; offering up Sacrifices and Thankſgiving to God, for reſtoring them to the Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of their native Country, their antient Laws and Religion, and for diſpoſing the Heart and Inclination of the King, ſo favourably toward them.

They ſpared for no Coſt in the Celebration of this Feſtival, and ſo replanted themſelves in *Jeruſalem*, where they erected an Ariſtocracy; for the ſovereign Power was lodged in the High-Prieſt, till the *Aſmonean* Family, upon a Turn of Affairs, entered upon the Government, and turned it into a Monarchy.

Before the Captivity, and for the Space of five hundred thirty-two Years, ſix Months, and ten Days, from the Time of *Saul* and *David*, they were governed by Kings; as they were likewiſe before, though under the Name of Judges, and that Form of Government continued upwards of five hundred Years, after the Adminiſtration of *Moſes* and *Joſhua*.

This was the State of the Jews, at the Time of the Reſtoration under *Cyrus* and *Darius*.

But the *Samaritans*, who where an envious People, put them to much Trouble; for they were powerful and Wealthy, and claiming Kindred with the *Perſians*, valued themſelves upon the Credit of their Original.

They murmered at the Taxes that where laid upon them by way of Contribution to the Sacrifices, made an In-

Intereſt to the Superintendent of the Works. And, in ſhort, either by themſelves, or others, improved all Opportunities of annoying the Jews.

This Diſorder prevailed ſo far, that the Senate and the People of *Jeruſalem*, drew up a Complaint againſt the *Samaritans*, and ſent *Zerubbabel* with four more of his Collegues upon an Embaſſy with it to *Darius*.

When the King came to conſider the Crimes that were charged upon the *Samaritans*, he gave them a Letter, addreſſed to the Officers and Lieutenants of that Province, and the Senate of *Samaria*, in Words to this Purport:

King Darius *to* Tangar *and* Sambaba, *the Maſter of the Horſe at* Samaria, *and to* Sadrack Bobelon, *and the reſt of their Subjects there, ſendeth greeting,*

WHereas I am given to underſtand by Zerubbabel, Ananias *and* Mardochæus, *on the Part of the Jews, that you ſtand accuſed of interrupting and diſcouraging the rebuilding of the Temple, and of refuſing to bare Part in the Charge of the Sacrifices, which by my Order and Command you ought to have done.*

This is to require you, upon the Sight of this Letter, forthwith to ſupply them out of my Treaſury in Samaria, *with whatſoever they ſhall want for the Uſe of their Sacrifices, and Workſhip, to the End that they may offer up daily Prayers and Oblations, both for myſelf, and for the People.*

CHAP. VI.

Artaxerxes *ſucceeds* Darius, *and favours the Cauſe of the* Jews. Nehemiah *ſuperintends the rebuilding of the Walls of* Jeruſalem.

ARTAXERXES who ſucceeded his Father *Darius* in the Government ſeems to have inherited his Piety and Virtue, as he encouraged and promoted the Deſigns of the *Jews* towards the Advancement of their Religion. *Joachim* the Son of *Jehu* was at this Time High Prieſt, but the Name of the High Prieſt of the *Jews* that lived at *Babylon*, was *Eſdras*, a Man of moſt exemplary Piety and Juſtice, nor had any one a fairer Reputation among the People. He was ſo well verſed in the Moſaic Law, that the King had a particular Eſteem for him on that Account.

Upon a Reſolution taken to go to *Jeruſalem*, and to carry ſeveral of the *Babylonian Jews* along with him, he deſired ſuch a Letter from the King as might recommend him to the Governors and Lieutenants of *Syria*, which he obtained to this Purport:

Artaxerxes *the King of Kings, to* Eſdras *the Prieſt, and Reader of the Holy Law of God, greeting,*

WHEREAS it is decreed by me and my ſeven Counſellors, that what Iſraelites *ſoever within my Dominions, with their Prieſts and Levites*

vites ſhall think fit to bear you Company to Jeruſalem; *I have, out of my Royal Clemency, granted them free Leave to go to* Judea, *to worſhip according to the Laws of their Country; and likewiſe to take along with them all the Gold and Silver, that your People throughout* Babylon *ſhall contribute toward that Service, for the Buying of Sacrifices, to offer upon the Altar to your God, and for making ſuch Veſſels of Gold and Silver, as you and your Brethren ſhall judge meet.*

It is alſo my Deſire, that what is thus given you, be dedicated to your God. And if you ſhould have Occaſion for any Thing elſe, uſe your own Diſcretion, and ſupply yourſelf out of the Public Treaſure; to which End I have already written to the Officers that have the Cuſtody of it, in Syria *and* Phœnice, *expreſly commanding them to furniſh whatſoever* Eſdras *the Prieſt, and Reader of the Law of God, ſhall deſire, without any Delay.*

And to the End that God may proſper both me and mine, I will have an hundred Cores of Wheat dedicated to God, according to the Proviſion of the Law.

And I do ſtrictly charge and require of the Magiſtrates, that they exact nothing from the Prieſts, or Levites, Holy Singers, Porters, or other Officers of the Temple; and that they lay no Burdens upon them.

And for yourſelf, Eſdras, *I do hereby give you full Authority, according to the Wiſdom you have received from above, to conſtitute Judges, that may ſee Juſtice done to the People through* Syria *and* Phœnice, *that underſtand the Law, and are conſcientious in their Duty. And at the ſame Time do you inſtruct the Ignorant, to the End, that all Tranſgreſſors againſt the Law of God, and of the King, may be puniſhed according to their Demerit. Farewell.*

Upon the Receipt of this Letter, *Eſdras* worſhipped God, and gave Thanks, aſcribing to his gracious Providence all the Benefits and Favours they had received from the King, who ſerved but as the Inſtrument of communicating the divine Bleſſings.

The Jews of that Country were, upon this Occaſion, ſummoned to a general Meeting at *Babylon*, where the Letter was read, and the Copy of it tranſcribed, and ſent away, to be communicated to all the Jews of *Medea*; but *Eſdras* kept the Original himſelf,

This Inſtance of the King's Piety towards God, and of the Reſpect and Kindneſs he had for *Eſdras*, was an agreeable Surpriſe to the People, inſomuch, that great Numbers of them packed up their Effects, and haſtened away to *Babylon*, with a full Purpoſe to return to *Jeruſalem*; but there were then another Sort of *Iſraelites*, who being accuſtomed to the Place, and ſettled in their Habitations, choſe rather to continue where they were. This ſeems to be the Reaſon, that there were two Tribes to be found in *Aſia* and *Europe*, under the *Roman* Emperor.

As for the other ten Tribes, they were all planted beyond the *Euphrates*, and ſo prodigiouſly encreaſed

that their Number was ſcarcely to be computed.

The Publication of this recommendatory Teſtimonial brought over Multitudes to *Eſdras*, not only Prieſts and Levites, but Temple Porters, Singers, and other Officers and Servants appertaining thereto.

Eſdras appointed thoſe, that were diſpoſed to return out of Captivity, a Rendezvous at the River *Euphrates*, where, after three Days Faſt, and the Solemnity of offering Vows and Prayers for a ſafe and proſperous Voyage, they entered on their Journey on the twelfth Day of the firſt Month, in the ſeventh Year of the Reign of *Artaxerxes*, and got to *Jeruſalem*, in the fifth Month of the ſame Year, where *Eſdras* immediately delivered out the Money he brought, to the Prieſts that had the Cuſtody of the holy Treaſure; ſix hundred and fifty Talents of Silver, a hundred Talents of Silver Veſſels, twenty Talents of Veſſels of Gold, and twelve Talents of fine Braſs, that was even more precious than Gold itſelf.

Theſe were the Bounties of the King and his Friends, and of the *Iſraelites* that continued in *Babylon*.

When *Eſdras* had acquitted himſelf of this Truſt, he offered unto God Burnt-Offerings, according to the Direction of the Law, twelve Bulls for the whole People of *Iſrael*, ſeventy-two Sheep and Lambs, and twelve Goats, for a Sin-Offering.

He delivered alſo the King's Letter to the Stewards and Governors of *Phœnice* and *Cœlo-ſyria*, who held the *Iſraelites* in great Eſteem, and readily ſupplied them with whatever they wanted, whoſe Undertakings and Counſel, in every Reſpect, ſeemed to have been diſtinguiſhed by peculiar Tokens of the Divine Bleſſing.

Having compoſed and regulated their Affairs, *Eſdras* received Information, that ſome of the Prieſts and Levites had departed from the Law, and their Duty, by marrying into foreign Families, and thereby confounding the Sacerdotal Race.

Application was therefore made to him, that he would aſſert the Obſervation of the Laws, leſt God in his Wrath, for the Iniquity of a few, ſhould avenge himſelf upon the whole Body of People.

Eſdras, upon this Complaint, rent his Cloaths for very Grief, tearing his Hair off of his Head and Beard, and caſting himſelf upon the Ground in Deſpair; for there was ſo many great Men concerned in this Abomination, that he thought it would be to no Purpoſe to lay any Injunction upon them, to part with their Wives and Children, ſo that he continued ſtill deſponding, with his Face upon the Earth.

All the People that retained any Senſe of Goodneſs and Reverence for the Laws of God and their Country, gathered together about him, to condole with him, and to ſympathize in his Sorrows.

Eſdras in the mean Time, holding up his Hands, ſaid,

Thou, O God, knoweſt I am aſhamed to lift up my Eyes to Heaven on the Behalf of theſe People, when I

con-

conſider, that after all the dreadful Judgments upon their Anceſtors for their Diſobedience, they do yet go on in the Steps of their Forefathers.

But, Lord, thy Mercy is infinite; wherefore have Pity, I beſeech thee, upon this miſerable Remnant of thy diſtreſſed Servants. And as thou haſt been graciouſly pleaſed to bring them home again, perfect the Work of thy Redemption, in the Pardon of their preſent Tranſgreſſion.

It is confeſſed, that they deſerve to die for their Iniquity; but their Truſt is in thy Goodneſs.

While the pious Prieſt was proſtrating himſelf at the Throne of Divine Grace, in Behalf of his Nation and People, amidſt a Throng of Men, Women, and Children, there came to him one *Jechonias*, a Man of Quality in *Jeruſalem*, with a publick Confeſſion and Declaration of the Sin they were all guilty of, that, contrary to the Law, they had married ſtrange Women, adviſing him to impoſe an Oath upon all that had ſo done, to turn away all their Wives and the Children they had by them, and to enjoin a ſevere Puniſhment on thoſe that ſhould refuſe to ſubmit to that Decree.

Eſdras approved the Counſel, and took an Oath of the Chief Prieſts and Levites, and of all *Iſrael*, to obey the propoſed Decree.

After this Tranſaction, he went from the Temple to the Chamber of *Joanan*, the Son of *Eliaſib*, where he ſpent that whole Day without eating any thing, through the great Anxiety of his Mind.

He then commanded, by Proclamation, all thoſe People that were returned out of Captivity, to meet at *Jeruſalem* in two or three Days; and in caſe of any Failure, either through Neglect or Contempt, annexed, as a Penalty, Excommunication, and Confiſcation of their Goods to the holy Treaſure.

Within three Days the two Tribes of *Juda* and *Benjamin* aſſembled, on the twentieth Day of the ninth Month, which the *Hebrews* call *Thebeth*, and the *Macedonians Apellæus*. And when they had placed themſelves in the upper Part of the Temple, the Elders being their preſent, *Eſdras* ſtood up and informed them, ſaying,

That whereas they were all guilty of a grievous Sin, who in Contempt of their Country's Laws had entered into Marriage with Strangers, they had no Way to recover God's Favour, and to ſecure themſelves from his Vengeance, but by utterly caſting off the Women they had ſo taken.

After this Declaration of *Eſdras*, they unanimouſly ſignified their Approbation of his Counſel, and Readineſs to comply with it; but the Number being very great, the Seaſon extremely cold, and the Buſineſs of great Importance, they looked upon it as a Thing that required Time and Conſideration to accompliſh: So that upon this Reflection it was propoſed that a Commiſſion of Enquiry might be iſſued out to a ſelect Number of eminent Men and Elders, who were free from the general Charge.

This Motion was unanimouſly receive

ceived and approved, and upon the firſt Day of the tenth Month, they entered upon the Inquiſition, which continued till the firſt Day of the Month following. Upon the Scrutiny, they found great Numbers of the Relations of *Jeſhua*, the High-Prieſt, as well as of other Prieſts and Levites, and the reſt of the *Iſraelites*, who being in the common Tranſgreſſion, joined immediately in the abandoning their Wives and Children, prefering the ſolemn Injunction of Obedience to the Laws of God, to all the Ties of paternal Affection.

After this Solemnity, they offered up Rams according to Cuſtom, for Peace-Offerings. Thus did *Eſdras* reform a groſs Abuſe, and introduce a pious Practice, that prevailed ever after.

In the ſeventh Month was the Feaſt of Tabernacles, and almoſt the whole Multitude of the *Iſraelites* were now met together upon the Occaſion, in that Part of the Temple which looks towards the Eaſt, where *Eſdras* at their Requeſt read the Law of God unto them as he ſtood in the Middle of the Crowd.

This Lecture continued from Morning to Mid-Day, to the great Edification of all the Hearers; for they were thereby not only given to underſtand the Rules and Meaſures of Truth and Righteouſneſs, preſent and future; but their Thoughts were alſo carried back to Reflections upon Things paſt, by a Recital of the Calamities that their Forefathers had endured, only for the Violation of thoſe Laws, in the Obſervance whereof they might have been ſecure and happy.

This Conſideration drew Tears from their Eyes, and *Eſdras* obſerving the pious Effect it had upon their Minds, bad them go Home, and ſet their Hearts at reſt, for it was a Kind of Prophanation of the holy Solemnity, to weep upon a Feſtival; wherefore he adviſed them to be rather free and merry, and to eat, drink, and rejoice, in Honour of the Day, exhorting them not to make their Repentance a Mortification, any further than to ſecure them for the future from a Relapſe into the ſame Errors.

The People were willing therefore to follow his Counſel, and celebrated the Feaſt as they ought to do; ſo that after eight Days ſpent in Mirth and Feaſting, they returned every Man to his own Habitation, but not without thankful Acknowledgments to *Eſdras*, for the Reformation he had wrought in the Government.

By this meritorious Service he gained infinitely upon the Hearts and Affections of the People, ſo that he lived with Honour, and died at *Jeruſalem* in an advanced Age, where he had alſo a moſt magnificent Burial.

Jehoiakim, the High-Prieſt, died alſo about the ſame Time, and *Eliaſim* his Son ſucceeded him.

There was among the Jewiſh Captives, a certain Perſon, whoſe Name was *Nehemiah* the Butler, or Cup-Bearer to *Artaxerxes*. As he was walking one Day before *Suſa*, the Capital of *Perſia*, happening to hear ſome Travellers that had come a long Journey

Journey together into the City, talking *Hebrew* one to another.

Upon which Occaſion he aſked them, from what Quarter they came? As they anſwered from *Judea*, he proceeded to divers other Queſtions concerning the Jews, and the State of their City.

They informed him, that Affairs were in a bad Situation; that their Walls were all pulled down, and their Country laid open to the Outrages and Incurſions of their malicious Neighbours; themſelves carried away into Captivity, and the Highways ſtrewed every where with dead Bodies.

Nehemiah could not forbear weeping at this deplorable State of his Countrymen and Kindred, and with his Eyes toward Heaven, he cried out to Almighty God.

Lord, how long, Lord, wilt thou ſuffer thy People to be trampled upon, and expoſed as a Prey to Mankind!

While *Nehemiah* was at the Gate, and in the Middle of his Lamentations, one of the Attendants brought him Word, that the King was ready to go to Supper; ſo that he haſtened away in Confuſion and Diſorder to his Duty.

The King, after Supper, being ſomewhat more chearful than before, and obſerving a Heavineſs of Countenance in *Nehemiah*, enquired the Cauſe?

Alas! Sir, ſays Nehemiah, (*after a ſhort ejaculatory Prayer, that God would give Energy and Perſuaſion to his Words;*) *How is it poſſible for me to be otherwiſe than overwhelmed with Grief and Heavineſs of Heart, when the Place of my Nativity is laid waſte and deſtroyed,* Jeruſalem *made an Heap of Rubbiſh, the Gates burnt, the Sepulchres and Monuments of my Anceſtors broken up, and the Aſhes of the Dead ſacrilegiouſly prophaned?*

Now, Sir, I have but one Favour to requeſt of you, which is, that I may have your Royal Leave to take a Journey thither, to help forward the Rebuilding of it.

The King granted his Petition, and promiſed him Letters recommendatory to the Governors, through whoſe Provinces he was to paſs, with Orders to treat him with all Manner of Reſpect, and to ſupply him with whatever he wanted toward the Work he was about. Wherefore the King encouraged him to ſet his Heart at Eaſe, and go on chearfully in his Service.

Upon this Aſſurance *Nehemiah* revived, and bleſſed God and the King upon finding ſo gracious a Diſpoſition in his Favour.

On the Day following the King ſent for *Nehemiah*, and gave him Letters of Credit to *Sadeus*, the Governor of *Syria*, *Phœnice* and *Samaria*, with Orders and Inſtructions to receive and aſſiſt him, as he had promiſed.

He went firſt to *Babylon*, and from thence, with as many of his Friends and Companions as voluntarily offered themſelves to bear him Company, he proceeded to *Jeruſalem*, where he arrived in the twenty-fifth Year of the Reign of *Artaxerxes*. And having firſt given his Friends the Sight

of his Credentials, he delivered them to *Sadeus*, and his Collegues, according to the Addreſs.

After this, he ſummoned a general Meeting of the People up to *Jeruſalem*, and harangued them in the Temple, after the following Manner:

You cannot but ſee and underſtand, ye Men of Judea, *that we are at this Day under the Power and Providence of the ſame Almighty and merciful God, that did ſo many great Things for our Forefathers,* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob, *out of a gracious Regard to their Piety and Virtue; and it is by the Favour of that God, that I have now obtained Leave from the King to enter upon the rebuilding of your Walls, and the compleating of the Work of the Temple, that is yet unfiniſhed.*

But be aſſured, that the neighbouring Nations are Enemies to your Undertaking, and will do all that is in their Power to obſtruct your Deſign, when they once ſee you heartily intent upon the Work. I therefore recommend it to you in the firſt Place to take Courage, and caſt yourſelves upon God, who will moſt certainly defeat all the Practices of your Enemies. And ſecondly, that you apply to your Buſineſs Day and Night, without Intermiſſion, this being the proper Seaſon for it.

Upon this Exhortation, *Nehemiah* immediately ordered the Magiſtrates to ſurvey the Ground, and take Meaſure of the Walls; and according to that Computation, to make an equal Diſtribution of the Work among the People, at ſo much a Town, or Village, as it ſhould fall out in Proportion; promiſing at the ſame Time the Aſſiſtance of himſelf, and of all that belonged to him, to join in the Service; and with theſe Words he diſmiſſed the Aſſembly.

The Authority of *Nehemiah* made ſuch an Impreſſion upon the Jews, that they immediately applied themſelves to their Buſineſs*.

The Rumour of this Enterprize was no ſooner brought to the *Ammonites*, the *Moabites*, the *Samaritans*, and the *Cælo-Syrians*, than they were enflamed with Envy and Reſentment; they left no Practice either of Force or Treaty to rencounter it.

They layed in wait for the Jews up and down in Ambuſhes, and deſtroyed a great many of them by Surprize. They kept Ruffians in Pay, to attempt the Perſon of *Nehemiah* himſelf, alarming the People with pretended Stories of Invaſion, that the Multitude, terrified thereat, were ready to deſiſt from the Undertaking. But *Nehemiah* firmly perſiſted, and under the Security of a ſlender Guard, wrought on without Wearineſs or Apprehenſion of Danger.

It was not for the Sake of his own Safety, or from the Fear of Death, that

* This was the firſt time that the People were ever called *Jews*, or their Country *Judea*; and it was ſo called from the Tribe of *Judah*, that were formerly poſſeſſed of that Quarter.

that he made this Proviſion; but he was well aſſured, that if he ſhould be cut off, his Countrymen would never finiſh the Building. So he gave Orders for the future, that all the Carpenters, Maſons, and other Labourers, ſhould work with their Swords by their Side, and their Bucklers within a convenient Diſtance, in order to be ready upon Occaſion.

He appointed Trumpeters alſo to be poſted within five hundred Paces one of another, and upon any Diſcovery of an Enemy, to give the Alarm, that the People might have Time to ſtand to their Arms, without any Danger of a Surprize.

He went every Night the Round of the City, and his Body was ſo inured to hard Work, hard Fare, and Watching, that it was Proof againſt all thoſe Difficulties, ſo that he never eat or ſlept more than was neceſſary to ſupport Nature. This was his Courſe of Life for two Years and three Months, during which he worked at the Walls, which were finiſhed in the eight and twentieth Year, and the ninth Month of the Reign of *Artaxerxes*.

Upon the perfecting of the Fortifications, *Nehemiah*, and the People, offered up their Sacrifice, and continued together, for eight Days, feaſting, and rejoicing, which was very unwelcome News to the *Syrians*, when they came to underſtand it.

Nehemiah reflecting, that the City at that Time was thin of Inhabitants, he perſuaded all the Prieſts and Levites thereabouts to take up their Habitations in the City, and he would be at the Charge of providing them Houſes.

He ordered likewiſe the People in the Country, that followed Huſbandry, to carry their Tents into the City for the Maintenance of the Prieſts and Levites, that they might not be diverted by any Wordly Cares from attending the Duty of their Office.

To this Plan they readily agreed on all Sides, by which Means the City was, by Degrees, better peopled.

After this, and many other glorious Actions, worthy of eternal Honour, *Nehemiah* departed this Life; and it may with Juſtice be recorded of him, that he was a Man of Virtue and ſtrict Honour, of eminent Bounty and extenſive Charity.

CHAP. VII.

Artaxerxes *is ſucceeded by his Son of the ſame Name.* Story *of* Eſther, Haman, *and* Mordecai.

ON the Demiſe of the late King of *Media* and *Perſia*, the Government devolved on his Son *Cyrus*, otherwiſe *Artaxerxes*, in whoſe Reign over the *Perſians*, the whole Nation of the *Jews*, with their Wives and Children, were in great Danger of being utterly deſtroyed.

When *Artaxerxes* had aſcended the Throne, and ſettled the Governors of one hundred and twenty-ſeven Provinces between *India* and *Ethiopia*,

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he made a moſt magnificent and ſumptuous Feaſt at *Suſa*, in the third Year of his Reign, where he treated his Friends and Officers, as became the Dignity of ſo great a Prince; and the Solemnity laſted a hundred and fourſcore Days. There were ſeveral other Nations alſo, and their Ambaſſadors, that aſſiſted at the Ceremony of the Entertainment ſeven whole Days ſucceſſively; it was ordered after this Manner:

There was a Tent erected upon Gold and Silver Pillars, covered with fine Linen and Purple, and large enough to receive ſome Thouſands of People. The Wine was ſerved up in Cups of Gold and precious Stones, that were made both for Curioſity and Delight. There were Orders given to the Waiters, after the *Perſian* Manner, that no Man ſhould be forced to drink any more than he had a Mind to, and Proclamation made all over his Dominions, that they ſhould ſet ſome certain Number of Days apart for the Celebration of a Feſtival for the Proſperity and Safety of the Kingdom. Queen *Vaſhti* had her Apartment alſo in the Palace for the Entertainment of the Women.

As ſhe was a Woman of great Beauty, the King was deſirous of ſhewing her to his Gueſts, and ſent for her to come into his Preſence; but as the Laws of *Perſia* allowed not Wives to be ſeen by any Men except their Domeſtics, ſhe refuſed to go to the King, and upon ſeveral Orders brought her by the Eunuchs to the ſame Purpoſe, ſhe perſiſted ſtill in the Denial.

The King was ſo incenſed at her Obſtinacy, that after the Feſtival was over, he called for the ſeven Commiſſioners that were expreſsly appointed for the Interpretation of the *Perſian* Laws, to adviſe with, what was to be done in this Caſe of his Wife's Contumacy and Diſobedience; complaining that it was not only once, but over and over that ſhe refuſed to come to him; and therefore deſired to know what the Law directed in that Caſe. One of them, whoſe Name was *Muchæus*, gave his Opinion, *That it was not only an Affront to himſelf in the Matter of Fact, but a Precedent of dangerous Conſequence to his Subjects in general, whoſe Wives would be apt to deſpiſe their Huſbands too, and by that Contempt provoke them to lewd Courſes, if this exemplary Contumacy of the Queen's againſt ſo mighty a King ſhould paſs unpuniſhed; concluding, that as it was a heinous Offence, ſo it ought to be treated with Severity; and that nothing leſs would ſatisfy, than the baniſhing of* Vaſhti *from the King's Court and Preſence for ever. And this to be done by Proclamation, and another taken in her Place.*

The King was ſo divided between the Love he had for the Queen, and the Reſpect he had for the Law, the one being againſt their parting, and the other againſt their living together, that he was diſtracted by this Difficulty of acting againſt his Inclination.

While he was in this Anxiety of Mind, his Friends plied him with good Offices and Counſel, to divert him from the Weakneſs of making him-

himſelf miſerable for the unprofitable Love of one Woman, when he might have the greateſt Beauties upon the Face of the Earth, at his Devotion, if he thought fit to command them; ſo that he had no more to do, but to get Sight of her, and take her for his Wife, out of the whole Sex. Variety, and a new Love, would quickly wear out the Fondneſs of a former, and a little Cuſtom and Converſation would bring him to himſelf again.

The King, upon ſecond Thought, was well pleaſed with the Advice, and ſent Commiſſioners immediately over all his Dominions, to take a View of the moſt celebrated Beauties they could find, and bring them to him.

They were punctual and diligent in the Execution of their Charge; and, among others, they found a Maid in *Babylon*, whoſe Name was *Eſther*.

Her Father and Mother were both dead, and ſhe was brought up under the Care of her Uncle *Mordecai*, who was one of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and a capital Man among the Jews.

This Virgin was ſo much beyond all the reſt, for the Graces of her Perſon, that ſhe was the Admiration of every one who ſaw her.

She was committed to the Care of one of the Eunuchs, where ſhe was treated with all poſſible Delicacy and Reſpect; that is, according to the Cuſtom of Eaſtern Nations, endowed with the richeſt of Eſſences and Perfumes, and all other ornamental Curioſities that were made Uſe of by great Ladies, to render them more agreeable and charming.

In this Manner was *Eſther* treated for the Space of ſix Months, in Company with four hundred Virgins; after which Time, being thus prepared for the King's Bed, he had every Day one of them brought him, whom he received into his Arms, and then ſent back again to the care of the ſame Eunuch.

But when it came to *Eſther's* Turn, he was ſo tranſported with her Company and Converſation that he took her to himſelf for his lawful Wife, and celebrated the Nuptials in the ſeventh Year of his Reign, and the twelfth Month, which was called *Adar*, ſending his Meſſengers throughout his Dominions to proclaim the Solemnity of a Marriage-Feſtival.

As for the *Medes* and *Perſians*, and the great Men of other Nations, the King himſelf entertained them at the Wedding Feaſt, for the Space of one whole Month. And upon his Wife's entering into the Palace, he placed the Crown upon her Head, and ſo lived with her without enquiring concerning her Country, or her Extraction.

Her Uncle removed from *Babylon* to *Suſa*, where he would be often waiting at the King's Gate, and ſtill inquiſitive after *Eſther's* Welfare, who was equally dear to him, as his own Child.

The King at this Time paſſed an Order, That none of his Domeſtics ſhould preſume, while he was ſitting upon his Royal Throne, to come to him,

him, unleſs they were called, or ſent for, upon Pain of loſing their Heads; and there were Officers, with their Axes always at hand, to do the Execution.

The King in the mean Time had a Golden Scepter in his Hand, and whenſoever he had a Mind to ſave any of thoſe that came uncalled, he held that Scepter forth, and upon their touching it, they were exempted from the Penalty.

There broke out, about this Time, a Conſpiracy that was formed between *Bigthana* and *Tereſh*, two of the Chamberlains, or Eunuchs, againſt the Perſon of the King.

Barnabazus, a Servant of one of them, and a Jew by Extraction, diſcovered this Treachery to *Mordecai*, the King's Uncle; and he, by the Hands of *Eſther*, to the King himſelf, who relied ſo much on her Affection and Loyalty, that he put the Criminals to the Queſtion; and upon Conviction, they were both delivered up to Juſtice.

The King gave *Mordecai* no other Reward for his Diſcovery, than by appointing the Service and Deliverance to be regiſtered upon the Record, and allowing him Admittance into the Palace, with the ſame Freedom and Privilege as one of his Domeſtics.

Haman, the Son of *Hammedatha*, an *Amalekite*, being now advanced by the King, and coming frequently to Court, the *Perſians*, as well as Strangers, paid him the greateſt Reverence; and it was the King's Pleaſure and Command that it ſhould be ſo, *Mordecai* was the only Perſon that did not bow to him, being a Ceremony contrary to the Practice of his Country.

Haman, taking Notice of this Singularity, asked him, What Countryman he was? And finding him to be a Jew, broke out into a violent Exclamation, at the Inſolence of ſuch a Miſcreant, that when all the Natives, and the free-born *Perſians*, with the greateſt Willingneſs, did him that Honour; this Jew, who was no better than a Slave, ſhould preſume to affront him,

In this Rage he took a Reſolution to be revenged upon *Mordecai*; and the Hatred he had for the Jews was ſo mortal, that it was not ſufficient, he thought, to wreak his Vengeance upon the Perſon of *Mordecai* alone, without deſtroying the whole Race at once; calling to Mind, at the ſame Time that the *Amalekites* his Countrymen, had been formerly driven out of their Land, and utterly exterminated by that People.

In the Heat of his Indignation, he haſtened to the King, and accoſted him with a Complaint, againſt the Jews, as a vile Generation of People in every Reſpect, unſociable in their Diſpoſition, ſingular in their Manners, given up to ſuperſtitious Laws and Ceremonies, ſcattered up and down in all Quarters of his Dominions, and Men that ſhewed themſelves in their Practices and Converſation, the common Enemies of Mankind.

Now, ſays Haman, *if you would lay the greateſt Obligation of Loyalty upon*

upon your Subjects, you must order this Sort of Men to be rooted out from among your People, without sparing so much as one Captive, or one Servant.

And, for our Security, that you shall not suffer by it in your Revenue, I will be answerable for forty thousand Talents of Silver, to be paid into your Treasury, out of my own Estate; for I shall not value any Diminution of my particular Fortune, provided that your Dominions may be cleared of this lewd People.

The King told *Haman*, upon this Proposal, that he would leave the Jews to be dealt with according to his Discretion, and remit the Money over and above.

Haman, immediately upon this published an Edict, in the King's Name, and sent it abroad thro' all his Dominions, to this Effect:

The great King Artaxerxes, *to the hundred and twenty-seven Governors of the Provinces, between* India *and* Ethiopia, *greeting.*

WHEREAS it hath pleased God to give me the Command of many Nations, and a Dominion over the rest of the World, as large as I can desire. Being resolved to do nothing that may be either tyrannical or grievous towards my People, and to bear a gentle and an easy Rule over them, with an Eye to the preserving of their Peace and Liberties, in the first Place, and the settling them in a State of Tranquility and Happiness, not to be shaken.

All this I have taken in mature Consideration; and being given to understand, by my trusty and well-beloved Friend and Counsellor, Haman, *a Person of approved Fidelity, Prudence and Justice, and whom I esteem above all others; that there is a Mixture of an inhuman Kind of People among my Subjects, who take upon them to govern by their own Laws, and to prescribe Ways to themselves in contempt of public Order and Government; Men depraved, both in their Customs and Manners; and Enemies, not only to Monarchy, but to Methods of our royal Administration.*

This is therefore to will and require you, that upon Notice given unto you by Haman, *(who is to me as a Father) of the Persons intended by this Proclamation, you put all the said Persons, Men, Women, and Children, to the Sword, without any Favour or Regard, to Person or Sex, in a strict pursuance of my Decree.*

And it is farther commanded, that you put this in Execution upon the thirteenth Day of the twelfth Month of this present Year; to compleat in one Day the Destruction of all mine and your Enemies, in order to a future Peace and Security, during the Remainder of our Lives.

This Edict was quickly spread from Town to Town, throughout the whole Empire, and the People prepared themselves accordingly, to execute the bloody Design upon the Jews at the Day appointed. And there was the same Disposition to Mischief at *Susa*, the King's Place of

of Reſidence, as of all other Parts.

The King and *Haman* all this while paſſed their Time in drinking, feaſting and merry-making. But the People of the Town were under very diſmal apprehenſions at the Thought of the barbarous Maſſacree.

As ſoon as *Mordecai* came to be informed of the Tenor and Intent of this Proclamation, he rent his Garments, put on Sackcloth, and went up and down the Town with Aſhes on his Head, exclaming againſt the horid Injuſtice of ſo bloody a Deſign upon the Jews.

In this inconſolable Plight, he roved about till he came at laſt to ſtop before the Gate of the King's Palace, for there was no Enterance allowed to any Man in that Habit. The Reſentment and Behaviour of the Jews was the ſame in all other Places, as at Court, upon the iſſuing of the King's Orders. That is, they were every where overwhelmed with Lamentations and Deſpair.

When it came to the Queen's Ear, that *Mordecai* was before the Gate of the Palace in that forlorn Habit, ſhe was troubled at the Report, and ſent an Attendant out to him to change his Garment; but his Anſwer was, That he could not do it, till the Cauſe was firſt removed, for which he aſſumed it.

It happened that *Hatach*, one of the King's Ennuchs, was at that Time in the Queen's Preſence; ſhe therefore called him to her, and ſent him out to learn the Cauſe of *Mordecai*'s aſſuming that Dreſs, and refuſing to quit it at her Requeſt.

The Eunuch put theſe Queſtions to *Mordecai*, who related to him the whole Story at length, How the King, at the Inſtigation of *Haman*, had iſſued out his royal Proclamation throughout all his Dominions, for the extirpating of the Jews and alſo how vaſt a Sum of Money *Haman* had offered by Way of Compoſition, for to do it.

Mordecai gave him a true Copy of the Edict, from the Original, to be delivered to the Queen; deſiring farther, that ſhe would make an humble Application to the King upon this Matter, and intercede with him on their behalf; repreſenting to her the Neceſſity of an immediate Interpoſition, as the Lives of the whole Nation were in queſtion; and as *Haman*, who was at the King's right Hand, would never leave Calumnating the Jews, and exaſperating the King againſt them, till he had gained his Point.

Upon the Eunuch's giving the Queen this Account of the Matter, ſhe ſent *Mordecai* Word, *That it was a capital Crime to break in upon the King when he was upon his Throne of State, without being called to attend him, unleſs he ſhould vouchſafe to hold forth his Golden Scepter in Token of his Pardon.*

When he heard this, he preſſed the Queen again, by the ſame Meſſenger, Telling her, That it was not her own perſonal Safety that was now in queſtion, but the Security of the whole Race; adviſing her likewiſe, by no Means, to neglect the preſent Opportunity of doing ſo neceſſary and chari-

charitable an Office, aſſuring her, that God himſelf would relieve them, even if ſhe ſhould neglect to do it. And that ſhe and her Family might live to beat the Mercy of thoſe whom ſhe now deſpiſed. Meſſage

Eſther, by the ſame Meſſuage, deſired her Uncle to call an Aſſembly of the Jews at *Suſa*, and hold a three Days Faſt, for the Safety of the Queen; informing him, that ſhe and her Servants would do the like; and that after this Preparation, ſhe was reſolved to go to the King, in Deſpite of all Prohibition and Danger; as ſhe muſt die, ſhe would frankly reſign her Life in the Service of her Country.

Mordecai, in Compliance with the Queen's Order, appointed a public Faſt, and humbled himſelf in Supplications to Almighty God, to defeat the Malice of their Enemies; and, according to his wonted Goodneſs, extend his Mercy to penitent Offenders, and finally to deliver them from the Deſtruction denounced againſt them. Repreſenting, *That it was not for any Fault of their own that they were expoſed to this Extremity, but through the Pride of* Haman's *Heart, who thought it an Indignity offered to himſelf in being denied that Adoration to him, which was due to God alone.* And that a whole Nation was not to be rooted out, becauſe they would not be corrupted into a Violation and Contempt of the Divine Laws.

The Devotion of the whole Multitude was to the ſame Effect; deſiring God to vouchſafe them his Protection, and avert that dreadful Judgment from the *Iſraelites*, that now hung over their Heads. The Queen worſhipped likewiſe with her Face proſtrate on the Ground, after the Manner of her Country, in a Mourning Weed, and impoſing upon herſelf a three Days Abſtinence from either Meat or Drink, or any other ſenſual Gratification, beſeeching God to move the King's Heart, in Favour of her Mediation for a miſerable and perſecuted People, by rendering both her Words and her Perſon more acceptable than ever, upon this fatal extremity, to the Confuſion of their Enemies, and of all their malicious Deſigns upon her poor diſtreſſed Countrymen.

After three Days ſpent in fervent and pious Importunity for Mercy and Compaſſion from the Throne of Divine Grace, the Queen put on her royal Apparel; and with her two Handmaids, bearing up her Train, advanced towards the King; her Face being covered with ſuch a Bluſh as expreſſed both Grace and Majeſty, but at the ſame Time ſome doubtful Apprehenſion; for upon the Sight of the King mounted on his Throne, and the Effulgence of his Robes, that were embroidered with Gold, Pearl and precious Stones, ſhe ſuddenly was ſtruck with a Trembling. And upon fancying (which affected her more than all his Splendor) that the King looked upon her, as if he was diſcompoſed, and out of Humour, ſhe fell into the Arms of one

of her Maids in a Swoon.* This Accident, by the Intervention of God's holy Will and Providence, alarmed the King, who fearing ſhe might not recover, haſtily deſcended from his Throne, took her into his Arms, and, with the kindeſt Words, gave her this Comfort, that no Advantage ſhould be made of the Law to her Prejudice, though ſhe came without calling; for that was a Decree that extended only to the Subjects, wherein ſhe was not all concerned, whom he looked upon as his Companion and Partner in the Empire.

With theſe Words he put his Golden Scepter into her Hands, and laying it gently upon her Neck, ſecured her from any farther Fear or Danger.

This Inſtance of Tenderneſs both of Love and Aſſurance, revived the affrighted Queen, who thus addreſſed the mighty *Artaxerxes*.

Sir, it is impoſſible for me to expreſs the Manner of this ſudden Seiſure; but I had no ſooner the awful Appearance of your ſacred Perſon and Majeſty in my View, than my Heart failed me.

She accompanied theſe Words with ſo languiſhing an Accent, and ſo weak a Voice, that the lively Repreſentation of what ſhe felt, made the King more ſolicitous to comfort her, which he did in Terms ſo explicit, that he bad her ask him any thing, to the one half of his Kingdom, and that it ſhould be given her.

Eſther replied, that her only Requeſt was this, That he would be pleaſed to take Part of an Entertainment with her that Day, which ſhe had provided for him, and permit *Haman* to come with him.

Her Suit was granted; they both came; and when the King was in his Cups, and in good Humour, he called upon his Wife as before, to aſk what ſhe pleaſed within that Compaſs, and it ſhould be granted her.

The Queen begged the King's Favour for the ſame Honour again the Day following at another Entertainment, and to bring *Haman* along with him once again; and informed him, ſhe would then take the Freedom to preſent her Petition.

The King was well pleaſed with the Propoſition; and *Haman* overjoyed to find himſelf the only Man that was ſingled out upon ſo honourable Occaſion, to bear the King Company at a Royal Banquet.

In his Return home, he happened to ſee *Mordecai* the Jew in the King's Palace; and taking Notice, that he paid him no Sort of Reverence, he went with his Wife *Zereſh*, with a Company of his Friends about him, and there told them the whole Story, how much he was in the good Graces of the King and the Queen;

* This Circumſtance of the Queen's ſwooning is not mentioned in any of the cononical Chapters of the Book of Eſther, but in the fifteenth of the Apocryphal, and in the ſixteenth, the King is called *Artaxerxes*, but in the Book of *Eſther*, he is called *Ahaſuerus*.

ESTHER *and* AHASUERUS, Esth. 5, 7.

how he had ſupped with them that Day, upon a particular Invitation, and was to be with them to-morrow again upon the ſame Account.

But, ſays he, *the inſolent Stiffneſs of the Jew* Mordecai *gives me no ſmall Uneaſineſs.*

Upon which his Wife gave him this Counſel. Order a Gallows of fifty Cubits high to be immediately ſet up, and obtain the King's Permiſſion to-morrow morning, to hang up *Mordecai* upon it.

Haman took his Wife's Counſel, and commanded his People to erect ſuch a Gallows in his own Palace, which he deſigned for the Execution of the *Jews*; and the Gibbet was ſet up accordingly. But God, who foreſees and orders all Events, diſappointed wicked *Haman* in all his impious Hopes and Purpoſes; for that very Night, the King finding he could not ſleep, and accounting it Time loſt to lie idle and waking, choſe rather to employ his Thoughts upon ſome Subject that might turn to the Advantage of his Government, and therefore commanded his Secretary to bring him his Memorials and Papers of State, as well modern as ancient, and to read the Accounts of them.

The King found upon the reading of them, the name of a Perſon that had great Honours and Poſſeſſions given him, as a Reward for a glorious and a remarkable Action: And ſo likewiſe of another, that made his Fortune by the Bounties of his Prince for his Fidelity: Coming at laſt to the particular Story of the Conſpiracy of the two Eunuchs, *Bigthana* and *Tereſh* againſt his own Perſon, and of the Diſcovery of this Treaſon by *Mordecai*; the Secretary reads it over, and was paſſing forward to the next; but the King bad him hold, and enquired if that Perſon had any Reward given him for his Service. The Secretary replied, that there was no Reward mentioned in the Relation, and then the King bad him ſtop there; and enquire of the Attendants what Time of Night it was; Anſwer being brought that it was break of Day, he was commanded to ſee if there were any of his Friends at the Palace Gate, and bring him Word, when he came to look he found *Haman*.

Haman, who was ealier up than ordinary, for fear of being too late with his Petition to the King againſt the Life of *Mordecai*. Word being brought to the King that *Haman* was at the Gate, he ordered him to be called in; and upon his Entrance into the Chamber, ſpoke to him after this Manner: *I know that you are the kindeſt Friend to me in the World; and therefore I would aſk your Counſel, what Mark of Honour you would adviſe me to beſtow upon the Perſon that I have the greateſt Obligation to imaginable; and I will do it with a Reſpect to my own royal Dignity, as well as for my Affection to my Subjects.*

Haman made no Doubt of finding his own Intereſt in his reſolving this Queſtion, and preſuming that this Character could not be intended to any other than himſelf: He therefore gave it as his Opinion, that the King,

King ſhould cloath the Man whom he deſired to honour, with his own Royal Apparel, mount him upon his own Horſe, make him a Preſent of a Golden Chain, and then cauſe ſome one or other of his particular Confidents and Friends to march before him, as a Herald, and make Proclamation all over the City: *Thus ſhall it be done to the Man whom the King vouchſafes to honour.*

Now *Haman* ſuggeſted this Counſel to the King, in Confidence that he would adjudge this Honour to himſelf, and no other; and the King was highly pleaſed with the Motion; *Whereupon go,* ſays he, *and take the Horſe, the Apparel, and the Chain, and when you have found out* Mordecai *the* Jew, *equip him in theſe Accoutrements; and when he is mounted, do you march before him in Quality of an Officer, to make the Proclamation; for you, being my particular Friend, are the fitteſt Man both to adviſe with, and to execute your own Counſel. I will do this Honour to* Mordecai, *becauſe I am indebted to him for my Life.*

This Order being intirely unexpected, ſtruck *Haman* with Amazement and Surprize: But notwithſtanding his Confuſion, he durſt do no other than execute it; and was obliged to go with the Horſe, Habit, and the Gold Chain to *Mordecai*, therefore finding him at the Palace, Gate in his Rags of Humiliation, he bad him ſtrip himſelf of his Sackcloth, and put on that Purple. Now the *Jew*, knowing nothing of the Matter, took the whole Ceremony for a Mock, and treated *Haman* in plain Terms, as a mean inſolent Wretch, to inſult the miſerable: But upon a farther Reaſoning of the Matter, *Haman* convinced him at laſt, that the King had ordered this Honour to be done him in Recompence of the Service he had rendered him, in ſaving his Life from the Conſpiracy of the two Eunuchs: And being thus convinced, he put on the Royal Purple, and the Golden Chain, mounted the King's Horſe, and took the Tour of the City; *Haman* making Proclamation before him, Thus ſhall it be done unto him that the King Honours.

Mordecai, after this, went to the King, and *Haman* departed to his own Houſe, where he related to his ſorrowful Wife and Friends, the lamentable Account of what had paſſed. Upon hearing theſe Circumſtances, they found there was no revenging themſelves upon *Mordecai*, for God had taken him into his Protection.

As they were in the Middle of this Diſcourſe, the King's Eunuchs came from *Eſther* to call *Haman* to Supper. One of them, whoſe Name was *Sabuchadas*, taking Notice of a Gibbet that was erected in the Court, aſked one of the Servants the Meaning of it, and underſtanding it was prepared for *Mordecai*, the Queen's Uncle, for whoſe Execution *Haman* had deſigned to intercede with the King; he paſſed on to his Duty. As they were at Supper, and all Parties pleaſed with the Entertainment, the King put the former Day's Propoſal again,

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to the Queen, with an Aſſurance, that let her aſk what ſhe pleaſed, it ſhould not be denied her.

Thus encouraged, ſhe repreſented in the moſt melting Strain, the unhappy Fate to which the *Jewiſh* Nation was deſtined, and gave the King to underſtand, that this was the Subject ſhe deſired to lay before him; obſerving, *That ſhe would by no Means interrupt his Affairs of State; or if it had been ſo ordered that her Countrymen might have only been ſold for Slaves, this Calamity might have been tolerable: ſo that ſhe had only this Suit to move, that he would be pleaſed to put a Stop to the imminent Deſtruction that was otherwiſe to be executed upon the whole Race.*

The King called out preſently to know who it was that had any ſuch Deſign on Foot. The Queen made Anſwer, *That* Haman *was the Author of that Advice, and that he did it out of an impulſe of pure Malice to that People.* This Diſcourſe put the King out of Humour, and he withdrew from the Entertainment into the Garden.

Haman by this Time found the Storm approaching, and began to apply himſelf to the Queen, with Acknowledgments of his Maſtakes, and Deſire of Pardon; and caſting himſelf upon the Bed by her in a Way of Humiliation and Reſpect. The King returning at the ſame Time, and ſeeing *Haman* in that Poſture upon the Bed, was more irritated by that Circumſtance, than by all the Reſt, calling him the baſeſt and wickedeſt of Men, for ſo inſolent an Attempt upon the Honour of his Wife. Theſe Words were accompanied with ſuch a Fierceneſs of Tone and Action, that *Haman* was ſtruck dumb at their very Utterance.

Upon this the Eunuch before mentioned told the King of a Gibbet of fifty Cubits in Height, that *Haman* had ſet up for *Mordecai* in his own Court, as he underſtood by one of his Servants, when he was there to give him an Invitation to Supper. The King immediately took up a Reſolution of inflicting the ſame Puniſhment therefore upon *Haman*, that he had prepared for *Mordecai*, and ordered him immediately to be hanged upon the ſame Gibbet.*

This was the End of *Haman*, the wicked Abuſer of the King's Goodneſs and Bounty. His Body was delivered up to Juſtice, and his Eſtate given to the Queen. The Queen had by this Time made it known to the King that *Mordecai* was her Kinſman; ſo that he ſent for him, and delivered him the ſame Ring that *Haman* had been entruſted with before. The Poſſeſſions of *Haman*,

* I cannot paſs over this wonderful Concurrence of Providence, without a remark upon the almighty Power and the admirable Juſtice and Wiſdom of God, not only in bringing *Haman* to this deſerved puniſhment, but entrapping him in the very ſnare he had laid for another, and turning a malicious Device upon the Head of the Contriver.

that the King had granted to the Queen, ſhe beſtowed upon *Mordecai*, and then made it her Requeſt to his Majeſty, that he would deliver the *Jews* out of that Apprehenſion for their Lives, under which they yet laboured, reminding him of the Letters that *Haman* the Son of *Hammedatha*, had diſperſed in his Name throughout the Empire, making Declaration that her own Life depended upon the Safety of her Country and her Relations.

The King aſſured her on his Royal Word, that nothing ſhould be done to the *Jews* without her Knowledge and Approbation; and he gave her Liberty to write what ſhe thought fit, concerning the *Jews*, in his Name, and declared that the Letters ſhould be ſigned, ſealed, and diſperſed by his Order throughout all his Dominions; adding, that when they ſhould once be confirmed by the Royal Signature, their Authority would paſs without Diſpute or Contradiction; wherefore the King appointed his Scribes and Secretaries to attend him, commanding them to write Letters on the Behalf of the *Jews* to the Magiſtrates of all the Nations that lie between *India* and *Ethiopia*, under the Command of a hundred and twenty ſeven Governors. Of which Letter the following is a Copy:

Artaxerxes, *the great King to our truſty Magiſtrates, greeting.*

WHEREAS it is a common Practice in the World for Men that are advanced rather upon Favour than Merit, not only to inſult their Inferiors, but to requite their Benefactors with Ingratitude, as much as in them lies, to extinguiſh all Senſe of Gratitude or Good Nature in Human Society. Perverting alſo, out of Pride and Weakneſs of Mind, the Power and Credit, that are repoſed in them, to the Diſhonour of their Patrons, from whom they received it; and under ſuch an Appearance too, as if they thought God himſelf could not ſee through the Diſguiſe.

Beſides that, it is no new Thing, for State Minions to gratify their own private Paſſion, to the Prejudice of their Maſters, by miſrepreſenting the Innocent. And by theſe ill Offices with the Prince, to put honeſt Men in Danger of their Lives.

I ſpeak not this upon meer Report, but upon the Certainty of what I have ſeen with my own Eyes, upon Proof, not Rumour. Wherefore, let no Regard be paid for the future to bare Accuſations, or, in Truth Slanders rather; but let the Fact be ſtrictly examined, and the Perſon accuſed, either acquitted or puniſhed, as he ſhall be found Innocent or Guilty.

It is well known that Haman, *was by Extraction an* Amalekite, *and not a* Perſian, *and with what Tenderneſs of*

of Affection and Hoſpitality I received him; what Honours I conferred upon him, even to the Degree of calling and eſteeming him as my Father, commanding all my Subjects to pay him a Reverence, next in order to what they ought to my own Perſon.

Now this Man was ſo intoxicated with Vanity and Arrogance, that paſſing all the Meaſures of Sobriety and Duty, he improved the Power I gave him, ſo far as in him lay, toward the ſupplanting of me in my Kingdom, and the deſtroying of that Perſon by treacherous Practices, to whom I ſtand indebted for my Life and Government. I ſpeak of Mordecai, *my Benefactor and Preſerver; and of my deareſt Wife the Queen likewiſe, whom I tender as the one half of my own Soul, and my Partner in the Empire. His Plot being in the firſt Place perfidiouſly to attempt the Lives of my moſt loyal Friends and then to ſeize upon my Crown and Government.*

Now foraſmuch as the lewd Deſigns of this wicked Man are unqueſtionably notorious, and particularly his bloody and barbarous Contrivance for the total Extirpation of the Jews. This is to notify and declare, that I find theſe People ſo far from being Troubleſome or Seditious, as he repreſented them, that, on the contrary, I highly approve of their inſtitutions, Ways and Manners, as a People worſhipping the ſame God, to whoſe Bounty and Protection our Family ſtands indebted both for the Poſſeſſion and Preſervation of our Empire.

It is therefore our royal Pleaſure, by theſe Preſents, not only to diſcharge the ſame People of all the Pains and Penalties to which they were made liable by our Letters communicated to you by the Hand of Haman, *but likewiſe that you treat them with all manner of Gentleneſs and Reſpect; having cauſed the Author of this malicious Perſecution, to be put to Death, upon a Gibbet, and his Family ſlain by the Sword, before the Gates of* Suſa, *as a moſt neceſſary Sacrifice to divine Juſtice.*

This is alſo farther to will and require you, That you forthwith diſpatch Copies of theſe our Letters throughout all our Dominions, permitting the Jews to live in a peaceable Enjoyment of their own Laws, and that you give them your Aid and Aſſiſtance toward vindicating of themſelves upon thoſe that ſpitefully and injuriouſly oppreſſed them in their adverſity.

And whereas the preciſe Time appointed for the utter Extermination and Deſtruction of theſe People was to have been upon the thirteenth Day of the twelfth Month, it is our pleaſure, that you pitch upon the ſame Month and Day for the Work of their Deliverance, as a Circumſtance the moſt agreeable to the Methods of God's Power and Juſtice, not doubting but that his Way of Proceeding will be much to the Satisfaction of all our Friends, and the example of it ſtand upon Record to Poſterity, for a Monumental Caution to all Traitors for the Time to come.

And be it alſo known to all our Cities, Towns and People herein concerned, That what Perſon ſoever ſhall preſume, either by Diſobedience, or Neglect, to act any Ways contrary to the

the Tenor of this our royal Command, he ſhall be liable to military Execution by Fire and Sword, whereof all our Subjects are to take Warning, and the Jews to be in Readineſs at the Time aſſigned, to do themſelves Right upon their Enemies.

Meſſengers were immediately diſpatched with theſe Letters to all Quarters. *Mordecai* in the mean Time, coming forth out of the Palace, dreſſed in royal Robes, a Crown and Golden Chain, the Jews ſoon interpreted his Appearance into a common Bleſſing to them all; and the Publication of the King's Letter throughout all the Towns and Cities of his Dominions, diffuſed ſuch a univerſal Joy among them, that a grateful Complacency appeared in every Countenance; nay, and this Grace of the King had ſo powerful an Influence and Effect, even upon other Nations, that many of them circumciſed themſelves, in Hopes they might eſcape, under the Diſguiſe of Jews, who were highly elevated by the King's aſſigning them the ſame Day for their Revenge that had been deſigned for their Execution, that is to ſay, the thirteenth Day of the twelfth Month, which the *Hebrews* call *Adar*, and the *Macedonians*, *Dyſtrus*.

Upon the obtaining of this Mandate, the Princes, Governors, Magiſtrates and Lieutenants, all paid a more than ordinary Reverence to the Jews, for Fear of the Power of *Mordecai*.

Upon the publiſhing of this Edict, the Jews put five hundred of their Enemies to the Sword at *Suſa*, and the King ſhewed the Queen the Number of them; but there was no Account taken of thoſe that were ſlain elſewhere; ſo he propoſed it to her, if ſhe would require any thing more, for he was reſolved to deny her nothing.

Her Requeſt was then, That the Jews might have one Day's Revenge more upon their Enemies; and that the ten *(a)* Sons of *Haman* might be hanged upon the Gallows, which the King alſo granted for the Day following, without the leaſt Heſitation; ſo that they gathered in Troops together, upon the fourteenth, and

(*a*) Ten Sons of *Haman* might be hang'd upon the Gallows. We are already told that theſe ten Sons were ſlain by the Sword, but the Reaſon why *Eſther* appears to be ſo ſolicious to have their dead Bodies hung upon the Gallows, might be becauſe they had ſhewn more Malice and Indignation againſt the *Jews*, and on the Day when the cruel Edict came to take Place, had made more deſperate Attacks upon them than any; though the Reaſon of State in this Severity, was doubtleſs to expoſe the Family of *Haman* to greater Infamy, and to deter other Counſellors from abuſing the King by falſe Miſrepreſentations.

The *Jews* indeed ſuffered none to hang on the Tree (as they called the Gallows) longer than till the Evening of the Day whereon they were executed; but other Nations let them hang untill they were conſumed by Crows, Vultures, or other ravenous Creatures, as appears from the Story of the *Gibeonites*, (2 Sam. xxi. 9. 10.) and from that vulgar ſaying among the *Roman*, Paſcere in cruce corvos.

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killed near three hundred more of their Adverſaries, without ſo much as touching any of their Goods; but in other Places, up and down the Empire, they deſtroyed ſeventy-five thouſand, of thoſe whom they reputed to be their Enemies.

This Slaughter was made upon the thirteenth; and, on the Day following, they feaſted. And ſo alſo at *Suſa*, they celebrated the fourteenth of the following Month as a great Feſtival.*

Mordecai, upon this, ſent his Orders to all the Jews, under the Dominion of *Artaxerxes*, requiring them to obſerve thoſe Days as Feſtivals; and to tranſmit the Obſervance of them to Poſterity, and thereby perpetuate its Memory; as it was but reaſonable to celebrate their Deliverance by a Solemnity of Rejoicing upon the ſame Day that it was by the Treachery of *Haman* appointed for the Maſſacre, and to make it a Day of Thankſgiving, in Memory, as well of their being freed from the Danger, as of having their Enemies given up intirely and ſecurely into their Hands.

Upon this Account it is, that thoſe Days are obſerved, which they call *Phruræa*, or *Purim*; which is to ſay, Feaſts of Obſervation.

Mordecai was now a Man of great Power with the King, both in Reſpect of his Adminiſtration, being near his Perſon, and as an Aſſiſtant and Companion to the Queen.

The Affairs of the Jews proſpered under their Direction and Favour, beyond all Expectation, through the Sanction and Patronage of the mighty Prince *Artaxerxes*.

* Theſe Days were long after this obſerved by the Jews with the ſame Solemnity, regaling one another by Way of Compliment, with ſome Preſent or Portion of the Entertainment.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE,

BOOK VIII.

WE deem it neceſſary, before we proceed in our Hiſtory, to obſerve to the candid Reader, that from this Period, to the Incarnation of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour; the Jewiſh State and Nation having undergone ſo many Revolutions, and been ſo cloſely connected with Affairs relative to foreign Nations, we ſhall, for the future, be under an indiſpenſable Neceſſity of referring to the Apocryphal Account; and alſo to that of *Joſephus*, univerſally allowed, the moſt impartial and authentic Hiſtorian of thoſe Times, in order to continue the Series of our Hiſtory, as propoſed.

This we may preſume to do without invalidating the ſacred Story; nay, by this, it will be abundantly authenticated, as the perfect Agreement between ſacred and profane Hiſtory will thereby be rendered apparent.

CHAP I.

Jeſhua *is ſlain by* John, *the High-Prieſt.* Alexander the Great *tranſfers the Seats of War from* Europe *into* Aſia. *Breaks the* Perſian *Empire, but treats the Jews with amazing Lenity, and many Tokens of Reſpect.*

AFTER the Death of *Eliaſib* the High-Prieſt, his Son *Judas*, by hereditary Right, ſucceeded to the Office, and, after his Deceaſe, the Pontificate devolved on his Son *John*, who was the Occaſion of the Violation and Prophanation of the Temple afterward by *Bagoſes*, Commander in Chief of the Troops of *Artaxerxes*, and of impoſing a Tribute upon the Jews, obliging them to allow out of the public Treaſure, fifty Drachma's per Day for every

every Lamb they ſacrificed, before they entered upon their Daily Offerings, which Impoſition was thus brought on.

John had a Brother, whoſe Name was *Jeſhua*, and *Bagoſes*, being very much his Friend, took upon him the advancing of *Jeſhua* to the Pontificate. *Jeſhua* depended ſo much upon his Aſſurance, that he took the Liberty to enter into a Diſpute with his Brother, in the Temple itſelf, upon this Subject; and the Conteſt proceeded ſo far, that his Brother, in a rage, ſet upon him and killed him.

This was the greateſt Affront to Religion that ever was committed, more eſpecially by a Prieſt; and for the farther Aggravation of the Scandal, it was beyond all Preſident, either among the Greeks, or Barbarians. But God would not ſuffer ſo audacious an Affront to eſcape unpuniſhed. For the People loſt their Liberty for it, and the *Perſians* prophaned the Temple.

As ſoon as the News of it came to *Bagoſes*, that the High-Prieſt had ſpilt the Blood of his Brother, in the very Temple, he called out to the Jews in Contempt and Indignation, *Prophane Wretches, to make Shambles of the Place of your Worſhip!* At the ſame Time preſſing to get into the Temple, but being oppoſed in his Paſſage, he ſaid unto them, *What, do you look upon my living Body to be fouler than the Carcaſs that lies here within?* And with theſe Words he forced his Way.

Upon this Occaſion he kept a ſevere Hand over the Jews for ſeven Years. But after the Death of *John*, his Son *Judas* came to the Prieſthood.

This *Judas* had a Brother, whoſe Name was *Manaſſes*, to whom *Sanballat*, underſtanding *Jeruſalem* to be a famous City, and that the Kings of it had put the *Syrians* and *Aſſyrians* to many difficulties, frankly gave his Daughter *Nicaſa* in Marriage as a Teſt and Earneſt of the Amity he propounded to himſelf with the Jews. This was that *Sanballat* that governed *Samaria* under the laſt *Darius*, a *Chuthite* born, from whence the *Samarians* had their Original.

Philip King of *Macedon* being treacherouſly murthered about this Time, by *Pauſanias*, in the City of *Ægea*; *Alexander* his Son ſucceeded to the Government, and croſſing the *Helleſpont*, gave *Darius* a total Overthrow at the River *Granicus*. After which he ſubdued *Lydia* and *Ionia*, and paſſing his Army through *Caria*, he entered into *Pamphylia*.

The Elders of *Jeruſalem* were at this Time very much unſatisfied with the Brother of *Judas*, the High-Prieſt, for taking to Wife a ſtrange Woman, inſomuch that the Diſguſt had almoſt occaſioned a Tumult, as it looked like a Step toward the Abolition of their Country's Laws abnot Marriages, becauſe if they had about ſuffered it to go on, it would by Degrees become a Cuſtom. Nor had they forgotten that this very Thing was the Cauſe of their former Captivity, and of all the Calamities that had enſued upon it; that is, the Tranſ-

Tranſgreſſion that drew thoſe Judgments upon them, was the marrying of Women that were not of their own Extraction; and therefore they poſitively required, That *Manaſſes* ſhould either diſmiſs his Wife, or ſerve no more at the Altar.

But the High-Prieſt and the People, being moved with Indignation, after this, would not ſuffer *Manaſſes* to officiate at the Altar; whereupon he ſent to *Sanballat*, his Father-in-Law, with a Profeſſion of the great Affection he had for his Daughter; but aſſured him, at the ſame Time, that he could not ſubmit to loſe his Prieſthood, and the Honour that was annexed to his Family, as the higheſt of all others in Eſteem among the Jews, for the Sake of a Wife, tho' never ſo excellent.

Sanballat told him, That he would undertake not only to ſecure him the Exerciſe of the Function, but advance him to the Pontificate, and eſtabliſh him Prince of the whole Country, upon Condition of owning his Daughter for his Wife, and that he would build a Temple for him upon Mount *Garizin*, that overlooked *Samaria* and the reſt of the Mountains thereabouts, not inferiour to that of *Jeruſalem*. And this he took upon him to ſee it affected by the Conſent of *Darius*.

Manaſſes depended ſo abſolutely upon this Aſſurance, that he made no Doubt at all of the Performance, and ſo continued with his Father.

Sanballat was now advanced in Years, and finding many Prieſts and *Iſraelites* entangled in ſuch Matches, the State of *Jeruſalem* was much troubled at it: for all thoſe irregular People went over to *Manaſſes*, *Sanballat* furniſhed them with Money, Houſes, Land and Stock, to maintain the Ambition of his Son-in-Law.

Upon the News of *Alexander's* paſſing the *Helleſpont*, and the famous Victory he had obtained at the River *Granicus*; *Darius*, to prevent his farther Progreſs, aſſembled all the Troops he could levy, to obſtruct his Paſſage, with a Reſolution to give the *Macedonians* battle, before they ſhould over-run the Whole of *Aſia*, which they intended to do; ſo that having paſſed the *Euphrates* with his Army, and alſo *Taurus*, a Mountain in *Cilicia*, he made neceſſary Preparations, with a Reſolution to fight the Enemy.

Sanballat was not a little comforted with this Advance of *Darius*; and in a full Confidence of Succeſs, told *Manaſſes*, that every Thing ſhould be made good that he had promiſed him, as ſoon as the King ſhould return; for he was fully perſuaded, (and all the *Aſiatics* were of his Opinion too) that the *Macedonians*, with their Handful of Men, would never ſtand the firſt Shock. But in the Event they found their Miſtake; for upon the Armies joining, *Darius* was totally routed, a great Part of his Army loſt, his Mother, Wife, and Children, made Priſoners, and himſelf forced to fly into *Perſia*.

Alexander, in the mean Time, marched into *Syria*, took *Damaſcus* and *Sidon*, and laid ſiege to *Tyre*, writing

writing to the High-Prieſt of the Jews, that he expected the ſame Aſſiſtances from them which they before had allowed to *Darius*; and that they ſhould provide a Market for the Supply of his Army, where he might have Neceſſaries for his Money, aſſuring them that they ſhould have no Reaſon to repent the Reſpect.

The Anſwer the High Prieſt returned was briefly this, That they had bound themſelves by an Oath to *Darius*, never to bear Arms againſt him; and that they were tied up by that Obligation for Life.

Alexander was highly incenſed at this Reply, but went on with the Siege of *Tyre*, not doubting of reducing it in a ſhort Time, and emboldened by this Proſpect declared that on the Surrender of the City, he would march againſt the high Prieſt himſelf, and gave all People to underſtand, how far Oaths were to be broken or kept. *Alexander*, who was indefatigable, took *Tyre* by Aſſault; from whence he proceeded to beſiege *Gaza*, a *Perſian* Garriſon, of which one *Babemeſes* was the Governor.

When *Sanballat* found that *Alexander* was before *Tyre*, he took that Opportunity of going over with eight thouſand of his own Men, to the Enemy's Camp, delivering up his Truſt, and tranferring his Allegiance from *Darius* to *Alexander*, who received him with open Arms, and deſired to know his Pleaſure. So *Sanballat* told him, that he had a Son-in-Law, whoſe Name was *Manaſſes*, the Brother of *Judas*, the high Prieſt of the *Jews*, who together with great Numbers of that People following him, deſired nothing more than Leave to build a Temple in that Province; ſetting forth alſo, that would be *Alexander*'s Intereſt to permit it, if it were but to divide the Power of the *Jews*, and to prevent Commotions, for that they were numerous, and as likely to be troubleſome to other Kings, as they were formerly to the *Syrians*.

This Favour was no ſooner granted, than they all applied themſelves to the Building of the Temple; *Manaſſes* was ordained to be the high Prieſt, and the Honour to deſcend to the Poſterity of *Sanballat*'s Daughter, as he promiſed to himſelf; but after ſeveral Months ſpent before *Tyre*, and two more at *Gaza*, *Sanballat* died. *Alexander* upon the taking of *Gaza*, advanced to *Jeruſalem*, which greatly perplexed *Judas* the high Prieſt, who knew not how to deport himſelf before a Prince, whom he had ſo highly provoked by a Refuſal to comply with his Orders; wherefore he appointed publick Prayers and Sacrifices to be offered up to God for his Aſſiſtance and Protection, and for the common Welfare of the People.

On the Night following God appeared to the high Prieſt in a Dream, bidding him be of good Courage, adorn the City with Flowers and Garlands, and without Ceremony open the Gates, and cauſe the People to march out in white Garments to meet *Alexander*, together with himſelf and the reſt of the Prieſts, in the

Habits of their Order, depending upon Providence for the Reſt.

Judas, upon waking, told the Citizens with great Joy the Subſtance of this Revelation, and put every Thing in Order to attend the Approach of the King. Receiving Intelligence ſoon after, that he was drawing near toward the Town, *Judas* advanced, together with his Prieſts and the Citizens, in Pomp and Solemnity, to a Place that is called *Saphа*; that is to ſay, a Place of Proſpect, becauſe it commands the View of both City and Temple. The *Phenicians* and *Chaldeans* determined on a general Plunder and Maſſacre, and vowed every Inſtance of Revenge that Indignation could ſuggeſt to a victorious Prince, under the Senſe and Provocation of the Affront he had received.

But in the Event, they found their Expectations diſappointed; for, when *Alexander* ſaw, from a Diſtance, the Order of the Proceſſion, the People in White, with the Prieſts at the Head of them, in their Silken Robes, and the High Prieſt himſelf in his Purple Stole, embroidered with Gold. his Mitre upon his Head, and a Golden Plate upon his Forehead, with the Name of GOD engraven upon it, the Majeſty of the Spectacle ſtruck him with ſo reverend an Awe, that he advanced to him in Perſon, adored the ſacred Inſcription, and ſaluted the High Prieſt himſelf; all the Jews at the ſame Time, with one Heart and Voice, ſaluting *Alexander* with loud Acclamations, and gathering in Multitudes about him.

The Kings of *Syria*, and the reſt that were there preſent, were ſo amazed at *Alexander's* Behaviour, that they could hardly think he enjoyed his Reaſon. *Parmenio* alone took the Freedom to aſk him, in a familiar Way, How it came to paſs that he who was adored by the whole Earth ſhould now deſcend to bow to a Jewiſh Prieſt?

Alexander reply'd, I do not adore the Man, but the God whom he ſerves. For ſome Time paſt, when I was at *Dion* in *Macedonia*, I ſaw this Man I remember, and in this very Habit. I was then deliberating what Courſe I ſhould take to conquer *Aſia*; and this very Perſon bad me paſs my Army over the River, and be confident, that if I would take his Counſel, I ſhould make myſelf Maſter of the *Perſian* Empire.

Upon the View of this Man, and in this Habit, I call to Mind my Dream at *Dion*, and that this is the lively Figure of what I ſaw there in a Viſion, and of the Perſon that encouraged me to this Expedition; ſo that it is not without a Divine Impulſe that I undertake this War; and I make no Doubt of gaining my Point upon the *Perſians*, and ſucceeding in all Things to my Wiſh.

After this Diſcourſe to *Parmenio*, the King embraced *Judas*, and was conducted into the City by the reſt of the Prieſts, where he went up to the Temple, and ſacrified in Form, according to Order, paying alſo a ſingular Veneration to the High Prieſt himſelf, who ſhewed the King, when the

the Ceremony was over, the Book of *Daniel*, and in it the Prediction of a certain *Greek*, in Time to come, that ſhould make himſelf Maſter of the *Perſian* Empire, which *Alexander* interpreted of himſelf; and then with great Satisfaction he diſcharged the Multitude, till the Day following, at which Time he called them together again, to know what Requeſt they had to make him.

The High Prieſt made anſwer, That they only deſired his Leave to enjoy the Freedom of their own Laws; and that they might be exempted from the ſeventh Year's Tribute, which was readily granted them.

They alſo beſought him farther, to allow the ſame Freedom to the Jews in *Babylon* and *Media*, which was likewiſe granted; offering them moreover, that if any of them were diſpoſed to take up Arms in his Service, they ſhould be received into his Army, and enjoy the Liberty of exerciſing their Religion as before, which Generoſity brought great numbers over to him.

Affairs being thus ſettled at *Jeruſalem*, *Alexander* marched with his Army from Place to Place among the neighbouring Cities, and wherever he came was well received.

The *Samaritans*, whoſe Capital at that Time was *Sichem*, and peopled by Jewiſh Deſerters, obſerving how honourably *Alexander* treated the Jews, began to think themſelves of acknowledging his Government, and returning to their former Profeſſion; for theſe People were even ever diſpoſed to change with the Revolution of Succeſs; who, when they found the Jews in Diſtreſs, thus argued. They are Strangers to us; we have nothing to do with them.

But as ſoon as ever Fortune ſmiled upon them, they claimed Kindred, and valued themſelves upon the very heraldry of their Deſcent from *Joſeph* and his Sons, *Manaſſeh* and *Ephraim*.

Alexander was hardly out of the City, when the *Sichemites*, in great Pomp and Parade, and with wonderful Joy in their Looks, preſented themſelves before him, in Company with the Troops that *Sanballat* had ſent over to him; requeſting the King, that he would vouchſafe to honour their City and Temple with his preſence.

The King ſpoke them fair, and promiſed to viſit them; but upon their deſiring an immunity of the ſeventh Year's Tribute, as they did not ſow that Year, *Alexander* aſked, What Countrymen the Petitioners were? They told them they were *Hebrews*, but that they were called *Sichemites* by the *Sidonians*.

The Queſtion was put to them again, Whether they were Jews, or not? They anſwered, No. Whereupon *Alexander* ſaid, I have granted this to the Jews. But however, when I come back again, I ſhall do what I think reaſonable, upon a fuller Information of the Matter.

The *Sichemites* were diſmiſſed; but he took *Sanballat*'s Men along with him into *Egypt*, alloting them a Diſtribution of Lands to live upon there

there, which they had afterwards in *Thebes*, where they were put in Garriſon.

After the Death of *Alexander*, the Empire was parted among the Succeſſors, only the Temple near *Garizin* remained untouched. And if any Time the Jews, at *Jeruſalem*, were found guilty of the Violation of their Laws, as in eating of forbidden Meats, the Breach of the Sabbath, or the like; they took Sanctuary with the *Sichemites*, upon a Pretence that they were unjuſtly accuſed.

About this Time the High Prieſt *Judas* died; and *Onias* his Son ſucceeded him in that Dignity.

CHAP. II.

Jeruſalem *is ſurpriſed by* Ptolemy *who tranſplants divers Colonies of the Inhabitants into* Egypt, *and honours many of them with Places of Truſt and Importance. Perpetual Wars between the* Jews *of* Jeruſalem *and the* Samaritans. *Divers Inſtances of Regard and Reſpect ſhewn to the* Jews *by King* Ptolemy.

WHEN *Alexander* King of *Macedon* had made him abſolute Maſter of the *Perſian* Empire, and ſettled the Affairs of the *Jews*, he departed this Life, and left the Empire broken, and parcelled out into many Principalities. *Aſia* fell to *Antigonus*. *Babylon*, with the Countries bordering upon it, to *Seleucus*. The *Helleſpont* to *Lyſimachus*, *Macedon* to *Caſſender*, and *Egypt* to *Ptolemy*, the Son of *Lagus*. Upon this Diviſion there enſued a long War between theſe ſeveral Princes, who were all Competitors for the Sovereign Command, to the Ruin of ſeveral conſiderable Cities, and the Loſs of many Lives.

The whole Tract of *Syria* was abundantly ſenſible of this Miſery, under the Government of *Ptolemy*, otherwiſe called the Saviour, (though never any Man had leſs Pretence to that Title than himſelf.) This was he who made himſelf Maſter of *Jeruſalem* by a Stratagem, upon a Sabbath Day, * under a Colour of Devotion, he treacherouſly poſſeſſed himſelf of the City without the leaſt Apprehenſion of any Danger, which made his Entrance as eaſy as his Adminiſtration afterwards was tyrannical and barbarous.

But *Ptolemy* carried away many Captives out of the mountainous Part of *Judea*, from about *Jeruſalem*, *Samaria*, and the Mountain *Garizin*, which

* *Agatharchides* the *Cnidian* confirms this in his Hiſtory of the Succeſſors of *Alexander*, when he imputes the Loſs of their Country and Liberties to their Vanity and Superſtition. His Words are theſe:

There are a People that are known by the name of *Jews*, and have their Habitation in a great and well fortify'd City called *Jeruſalem*. Theſe Men fell into the Hands of *Ptolemy*, and ſubjected themſelves to a cruel Slavery upon a fantaſtical Scruple of Conſcience, that would not ſuffer them to take up Arms againſt an Oppreſſor in their own Defence, upon that Day.

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he tranſported into *Egypt*; and then reflecting upon the ſolemn Nature of an Oath among the Jews, by their Fidelity to *Darius*, even after his overthrow notwithſtanding the Summons, and the Invitation of *Alexander* to come over to him, he diſpoſed of them into ſtrong Holds, Garriſons, and Places of Truſt, upon their Oath of Fidelity, to be true to him and his Succeſſors; granting them alſo Immunities and Privileges in *Alexandria*, in common with the *Macedonians*; ſo that betwixt the Temptation of *Ptolemy*'s Liberality on the one Hand, and the Pleaſure and Convenience of a fruitful Country on the other, there came over a great Number of Jews into *Egypt*, from other Parts.

But the Jews and the *Samaritans* could never be reconciled concerning their antient Laws and Conſtitutions; the one inſiſting, that the Temple at *Jeruſalem* was the only holy Place, and the Jews not allowed to ſend their Sacrifices any where elſe. The other delaring for the Temple at *Garizin*, inſomuch that there was a great deal of Blood ſpilt upon the Occaſion.

On the demiſe of *Ptolemy*, ſurnamed the *Saviour*, *Philadelphus* his Son ſucceeded to the Government of *Egypt*. He reigned thirty-nine Years, and gave Order for the tranſlating the Law into the *Greek* Tongue.

There were at this Time Captives in *Egypt*, to the Number of a hundred and twenty thouſand Jews, which *Philadelphus* commanded to be ſet at Liberty upon the following Occaſion.

Demetrius Phalereus having under his Care and Truſt the King's Library, made it his Buſineſs to make a Collection of all Books that were extant.

This being the peculiar Bias of his Diſpoſition, he bought up all the choiceſt Books, which he deemed worthy of the King's Peruſal. The King on a certain Occaſion enquiring of his Librarian, how many thouſand Volumes he thought he had got? He told him two hundred thouſand; but that he hoped in a ſhort Time to make them five hundred thouſand: as he was certainly informed, that there was a great Number of choice Manuſcripts among the Jews, concerning their Laws, Cuſtoms and Ceremonies, worthy his Peruſal, and the Honour of a Place in the royal Library. But being written in their own Language, it would be a Matter of great Difficulty to tranſlate them into *Greek*; for though there might ſeem to be ſome Reſemblance and Affinity between the Language and Writing of one and of the other, there were yet Idioms peculiar to each, and diſtinct from the other.

He added farther this invaluable Circumſtance ſhould by no Means diſcourage a laudable Attempt to tranſlate them into the *Greek*, eſpecially as there was Money in the Treaſury ſufficient to defray the Expences incident to the Undertakeing.

The King highly commended this Project of *Demetrius*; and wrote to the High-Prieſt of the Jews to give him his Aſſiſtance in providing theſe Copies.

There was one *Ariſtæus*, a particular Confident of the King's, who on Account of his great Modeſty, had his Maſter's Ear and Confidence. This Perſon had been a long Time very deſirous of procuring the Liberty of the Jews; and, embracing this Opportunity, applied firſt to *Soſibius*, *Tarantinus*, and *Andraes*, three Captains of the Guards, to try how they ſtood affected; and upon finding them well diſpoſed, he beſought them earneſtly to aſſiſt him with their Intereſt, toward the doing of ſo good an Office; upon which Aſſurance he addreſſed himſelf to the King after this Manner.

If I may preſume, Sir, to lay my Thoughts at your Royal Feet, in all Simplicity, and without Diſguiſe, ſince it is your Pleaſure, that the Laws of the Jews be not only tranſcribed, but tranſlated, to anſwer your preſent Purpoſe, I cannot ſee how it can be fairly done, while ſo many of that Nation are in Bondage under your Government, from whom you require and expect ſo neceſſary an Aſſiſtance and Service.

It ſeems to me to be an Act worthy of your Magnificence and Goodneſs, to ſet theſe poor People at Liberty from their preſent Miſery; for by all that ever I could underſtand, the ſame God that orders and over-rules your Government, is the Author of their Laws; and both we and they worſhip the ſame Creator and Almighty Power, only under the Name of Jupiter, *or* Jove, *à* Juvando, *from helping, being the Life of us all.*

Wherefore you may be helping, out of a Reverence to that God whom they love and worſhip with a Zeal and Affection beyond all other Mortal, to reſtore theſe wretched Exiles to their own Country, that they may end their Days where they have received their Birth, as in the Place where Providence had aſſigned them.

I do not preſume, Sir, to interpoſe on their Behalf out of any Partiality, upon the Account of Tribe or Extraction, but in Conſideration that the ſame God is the Creator of us all, and that ſo noble an Act of your royal Clemency would be acceptable even to God himſelf.

The King then aſked him, How many Thouſands there were that would ſtand in Need of this Indulgence? *Andraes*, being preſent, made Anſwer, That he believed that there might be a hundred and twenty thouſand Souls.

Well, ſays the King to *Ariſtæus*, and doſt thou take this for ſo moderate a Requeſt?

Sobiſius, and the reſt that were preſent, obſerved, That it would be an Action becoming the Dignity of ſo great a Prince, to be merciful to others, in acknowledgment of the Honour that he himſelf had received from above.

The King was ſo well pleaſed with this

this Propoſal, that he ordered an Allowance of a hundred and twenty Drachma's to the Soldiers for every Jew they had in Cuſtody, to be made good to them on the next Pay-Day, over and above their Stipend, with a further Promiſe to anſwer the Deſire of *Ariſtæus*, (or, in Truth, the Appointment of the Almighty,) in all Points to ratify the Whole by a public Edict, wherein ſhould be comprehended, not only thoſe which his Father, or his Army, had carried away, but thoſe alſo, that either before, or ſince that Time, had been taken into Captivity.

His Friends told him, that at this Rate theſe People would ſtand him in at leaſt four hundred Talents. But the King ſcrupled not that Sum, to effect ſo glorious an Undertaking; for, ſaid he the Thing ſhall be done.

The following is a Copy of the proclamation.

It is our royal Will and Pleaſure, That all the Jews whatſoever, that have been ſubdued, or taken by any of my Father's Forces, upon their Incurſions into Syria *or* Phenice; *and thoſe brought away or ſold into any of my Dominions. Likewiſe thoſe that either before or ſince that Time have been ſo ſold or enſlaved, be ſet free, upon the Payment of one hundred and twenty Drachma's for every ſuch Slave; the Soldiers to receive this Redemption Money, together with their Pay, and the reſt out of the Treaſury; for the forcing many People away into Captivity, and the revenging of their Country by the Outrage and Licence of the Soldiers, for the Sake purely of the Pillage and Booty, was a Courſe that my Father undoubtedly neither intended nor approved, and a Thing contrary to common Equity and Reaſon; Wherefore, out of a Reverence to the Memory of my Father, and a Commiſeration of the Poor and Weak that ſuffer under the Power of Oppreſſion and Violence.*

Now, I do hereby expreſly charge and command, that all the Jews that are at this Time in Servitude, be immediately diſmiſſed, upon the Payment of the aforeſaid Sum to their reſpective Maſters, in Obedience to this our Mandate, without any Fraud whatſoever.

And farther, That this our Proclamation be made public for three Days ſucceſſively, after the Receipt of it; and in the mean Time, that the aforeſaid Maſters bring in a Liſt of their Priſoners to ſuch Officers, and in ſuch Manner as we ſhall find moſt for our Purpoſe,

And all this to be done upon the Peril of the Confiſcation of his Goods, if any Man ſhall be found acting contrary to the Tenor hereof.

Upon the firſt Sight of this Grant, the King obſerved, That the Proviſion for the Liberty of thoſe that were taken either before, or after, was not ſo particularly expreſſed, but there was Room to evade it; ſo that he, of his own Generoſity and good Pleaſure, ſuperadded a Lattitude of Indulgence in thoſe Caſes, and gave poſitive Orders to the Collectors of the Tribute, and the Officers of his Treaſury, to have the Money in Rea-

Readineſs for the Ranſom of the Jews.

Within ſeven Days the whole Work was accompliſhed at the King's Charge, to the Value of four hundred and ſixty Talents; the Maſters inſiſting upon ſome Rate for the Children, that they had for the reſt, though the King's Edict extended no farther than to thoſe that were brought away Priſoners, without comprehending ſuch as were born there.

When the illuſtrous Deſign was thus far executed, with the ſtricteſt Juſtice and Honour, the King commanded *Demetrius* to publiſh his royal Will and Pleaſure concerning the Tranſlation of the Jewiſh Books, and Records, ſo that the Librarian cauſed his Petition to be regiſtered, ſetting forth the Preſents that were made towards the Promotion of the great Work.

Now the Petition aforeſaid ran in Terms to this Purpoſe.

Demetrius *to the Great King.*

SINCE it is your Royal Will and Command, that I ſhould do my Endeavour to ſupply what may be yet farther added toward the Perfection of your Library, and to find out what curious and uſeful Books and Copies may have hitherto eſcaped my Search and Enquiry. This is humbly to inform your Majeſty, that after much Study and Thought upon this Matter, I do not find any Thing ſo conducive to your preſent Purpoſe, as the Hiſtory of the Jewiſh Laws; for being written in Hebrew *Idiom, it will be hard for us to underſtand them. Beſides the Verſion we have already of them, is not ſo correct as it ſhould be, for Want of a Royal Authority and Encouragement toward the making of them known; ſo that it will be neceſſary to have them accurately tranſlated, as being a Body of the wiſeſt and moſt perfect Laws that are extant, God himſelf having been the Author of them.*

For this Reaſon Hecaæus *the* Abderite *obſerves, that we find in none of the Poets or Hiſtorians, any Mention of theſe Laws, or of the Adminiſtration of them; the Original and Inſtitution of them being ſacred, and not to be prophaned by unhallowed Lips. Wherefore your Majeſty may be pleaſed, if you ſhould judge it meet, to write to the High Prieſt of the Jews only to ſend you out of every Tribe, ſix Elders, whom he ſhall make Choice of, as Men beſt ſkilled in the Knowledge of their Conſtitutions and Cuſtoms; and by their Aſſiſtance, in the interpreting and expounding of their Writings, we may be able to gather ſomething from them to your Majeſty's Satisfaction.*

The King, upon this Motion gave Directions for Letters to be written to *Eleazar* the High Prieſt, according to the Propoſal of *Demetrius*; taking Notice alſo of the general Releaſe of all the Jews that were Priſoners in *Egypt*.

The King, alſo ſent a Preſent of fifty Talents of Gold, for Cups and Bowls, and Gifts to a great Value in

in precious Stones, ordering thoſe that had Care of the Coffers, wherein they are depoſited, to let the Lapidaries chuſe as they thought fit; and beſide all this, the King aſſigned a hundred Talents more for Sacrifices, and other Services of the Temple.

Upon the Death of the high Prieſt *Onias*, his Son *Simon* ſucceeded to the Office; He was a Perſon of ſingular Piety towards God, and exemplary Tenderneſs and Humanity toward Mankind; from which Character he was ſirnamed the Juſt. *Simon* lived not long, and leaving behind him only one Son, a Child, whoſe Name was *Onias*, his Brother *Eleazar*, entered upon the Pontificate; and it was to this *Eleazar* that *Ptolemy* wrote the following Letter.

King Ptolemy *to* Eleazar *the high Prieſt, ſendeth greeting.*

WHEREAS *there were great Numbers of* Jews *in my Dominions that were brought Captives hither by the* Perſians *while they were in power; and whereas my Father had ſo great a Value for them, that he entruſted ſeveral of them with Poſts in his Armies, and in his ſtrong Holds and Garriſons, for a Check upon the* Egyptians, *with the Allowance of large Penſions for their Service; Be it known unto you, that I myſelf alſo, have been well diſpoſed towards the* Jews, *ſince my Acceſſion to the Throne of* Egypt, *having ſet above an hundred thouſand of them at Liberty, and paid the Charge of their Ranſoms out of my own Coffers.*

Some of them I have made uſe of in my Army, others, as I found them diſcreet and truſty, I have entertained about my Perſon, and in the Court, thinking, that I can do nothing more acceptable to God, then good Offices to others for his Sake, to whom I owe my Government and Being; wherefore out of a Deſire to ſerve the Jews *all over the World, to the uttermoſt of my Power, I have propoſed tranſlating the Books of your Law into Greek, and giving the Tranſlation a Place in my own Library.*

In order to the compaſſing this Deſign, I ſhall eſteem it a great Favour if you will make choice of ſix Elders out of each of your ſeveral Tribes, whom you know to have the greateſt Skill and Underſtanding in the Laws, and ſend them to aſſiſt me in this Tranſlation, for I promiſe myſelf, if I ſucceed in this Undertaking, to gain immortal Honour by it. The Perſons I employ to treat with you about this Affair, are Andreas, *a Captain of Guards, and* Ariſtæus, *two of my truſty and well-beloved Friends, whom I have charged alſo with a Preſent of a hundred Talents of Silver for you; which I ſend towards your Sacrifices and your Temple. Your Anſwer as ſoon as poſſible will be acceptable.*

Upon the Receipt of this Letter *Eleazar*, with all the Deference and Reſpect imaginable, returning the following Anſwer.

Eleazar *the high Prieſt to King* Ptolemy, *greeting.*

IF *it be well with your moſt excellent Majeſty, with your Queen* Arſinoe, *and with your illuſtrious Family, it is ſo likewiſe with your Servants the* Jews. *Your moſt gracious Letter is come to our Hands, and we have read it in a full Congregation with infinite Joy and Satisfaction, as an Inſtance not only of your Clemency and Good-Will towards a diſtreſſed People, but as a Token alſo of your ſingular Reverence for the Worſhip of the great God.*

We have received alſo by the ſame Hands; that is to ſay, by the Hands of Andreas *and* Ariſtæus (*your beloved and learned Friends,*) *twenty Golden Cups, thirty Silver ones, five Goblets, and a Table to be conſecrated for the Service of the Altar, together with a hundred Talents towards the Charge of Sacrifices, and other Services for the Temple; all which we have ſhowed and repreſented unto our Brethren, in the moſt affectionate Terms of Gratitude and Reſpect; and we are all ſo ſenſible of the great Obligations you have been pleaſed to lay upon us, that you may depend our Readineſs to ſerve and obey you in all Things without Reſerve, to the uttermoſt of our Power, in a juſt Acknowledgm nt of your Grace and Goodneſs.*

Purſuant to this Senſe and Conſciouſneſs of our Duty, we have recommended unto God in our publick Prayers the Protection of your Royal Perſon, Siſter, and Children, together with all that are near and dear to you, wiſhing Peace and Proſperity to yourſelf and People; and beſeeching God, that the Work you have now in Hand, of compiling a Collection and Hiſtory of our Laws and Antiquities, may be of as much Satisfaction and Advantage to you as your own Heart can Deſire.

In order to this End I have ſent ſix Elders out of every Tribe, with the Law, to attend your Pleaſure, ſubmitting ourſelves upon the Whole to your Piety and Juſtice, that after the ſubſcribing of them, they may be returned to us ſafe by the ſame Bearer; recommending your Majeſty to the Providence of the Almighty.

This was the high Prieſt's Anſwer to the King's Letter, to which were ſubjoined, the Names of the ſeventy Elders that were ſent by *Eleazar* upon this Occaſion, which Names we need not enumerate in this Place. But it would be doing Injuſtice to the Character and Memory of this generous and pious Prince, to omit in this Part of our Hiſtory the many and valuable Preſents he made upon the Occaſion, together with the extraordinary Diligence and Ardour he exerted in the Promotion of the magnificent Undertaking. As a Memorial therefore of the ſame, we cite the following Particular, beginning with the Golden Table.

As to the Dimenſions, the King ſent his Artificers to learn out the Meaſure of the former Table at *Jeruſalem*, and to ſee whether the Place would not admit of a larger. They

They brought him Word that he might make it as large as he pleaſed; whereupon he propoſed to himſelf to make this five Times larger than the other. But conſidering, that ſo great a Bulk might poſſibly make it too cumberſome and unweildy for daily Uſe, and look more like a Work of Oſtentation than for Service, he came to a Reſolution with Reſpect to the Dimenſion.

Now the King was well verſed in the Nature and Reaſon of Things, and enjoyed ſuch a Preſence of thought, for the finding out of Expedients and new Inventions, that it was a common Practice with him to form his own Deſigns, and preſcribe to the very Workmen themſelves, their preciſe Rules and Meaſures; ſo that for the Proportions of this Table, he ordered it to be two Cubits and a half in Length, and one and a half in Height; all of ſolid Gold, and round about it a Border to be made of a Hand's Breadth, ſet out on three Sides with curious carving of Flower Works, twiſted Strings, and other agreeable Figures; which being triangular, were likewiſe ſo equal and juſt, that turn it which Way you would, (as it was eaſily tranſpoſed,) the Proſpect would be the ſame.

This Table was delicately wrought all over, but the Part of it eſpecially that was moſt in Sight; with an Intermixture of precious Stones looped together by Golden Buckles, to the String Work before-mentioned, at equal Diſtances one from another. The Outſide of it was ſet with other rich Stones of an oval Cut, and an emboſſed Work of Twigs and Branches creeping round the Table. There were alſo ſeveral Sorts of Fruits wrought together under the Figure of a Crown, as Bunches of Grapes, Ears of Corn, Pomegranates, &c. all in their proper and natural Poſition, and expreſſed by Stones ſet in Gold, bearing the native Colour of what they repreſented. Under this Crown was another Row of Ovals; which, for the Matter, the Order, and Ornament, was ſo like the former, and ſo exactly uniform, that there was no diſtinguiſhing one Part from the other. Under the Table from Side to Side, there paſſed a Golden Plate of four Fingers Breadth; and into this Plate the Feet were faſtened with Springs and Hooks to keep them firm and ſteady, by binding the Cover and the Frame together.

There was drawn alſo upon this Table the Reſemblance of a Meander, the Courſe of which was marked out with Stones of Luſtre and Value; Rubies, Emeralds, and whatever elſe was moſt precious or excellent in their Kind. Along this Meander there were divers Pieces of Sculpture in Bows and Knots, which were ſo embelliſhed by an orderly diſpoſition of Chryſtal and Amber, for the Advantage of the View, that it made altogether one of the moſt agreeable Spectacles imaginable.

The Corniſhes of the Feet had the reſemblance of a Lilly Work. The Stem upright, with the Leaves and Tendrils winding under the Table.

The Baſis was a Hand's Breadth over

over, garniſhed with Rubies, and a Border round about it; and two Hands diſtance between the Feet that reſted upon it.

The graving Work of theſe Feet was incomparable, being the Fancy of a Foilage of the Vine and the Ivy, ſo exquiſitely executed, with Grapes and Berries, that it was hard to diſtinguiſh them. But upon the leaſt Breath of Air, the Leaves would move and play, as if it had been the Work of Nature rather than Art.

This Table conſiſted of three Parts, which were ſo artifically put together, that there was no Joints to be diſcerned, or ſo much as to be imagined where they met, and the thickneſs of it was half a Cubit.

This great Prince convinced all, by the Magnificence of his Preſent, the ineſtimable Value of the Materials, and the exquiſite Curioſity and Perfection of the whole Work, that what he abated of his firſt Project in Size and Proportion, was abundantly ſupplied by a moſt munificent expence in Art and Ornament.

There was alſo a Pair of large Golden Cups, wrought half way to the Bowl, and inlaid with all Sorts of precious Stones, orderly ranged into the Reſemblance of a Meander of a Cubit over, with delicate Figures of Twigs, branching out into a kind of Net-work, up to the Brim, and interlaced with ſeveral curious Deſigns, about four Fingers broad, and adorned with Stones of Value, as before; the Borders were alſo ſet with an Intermixture of Lillies, Flowers, Vines, Grapes, and the like, round the Lips of the Veſſel.

This was the Form of finiſhing of theſe Goblets; and for the Contents, they held three or four Gallons a-piece; and the Silver Pieces, were ſo glorious and radient, that no Chryſtal was comparable to them.

The King, after all this, furniſhed thirty Golden Veſſels more, richly adorned with precious Stones, and overſhadowed with Vine and Ivy-Leaves in curious Sculptre.

Neither was the Excellency of theſe miraculous Pieces, wholly aſcribed to the Deſign and Maſtery of the Artificer; but the King himſelf took a kind of Pleaſure in contributing to the Perfection of this Work, making it a great Part of his Care and Buſineſs, to viſit the Shops, and ſuperintend the Maſters themſelves in the Execution of their Charge, which rendered them much more induſtrious and intent upon their Buſineſs, when they ſaw the King himſelf had a more than ordinary Regard and Concern for the Proſecution of the glorious Undertaking.

Upon the Delivery of theſe Donations, and the Dedication of them to the Uſe and Service of the holy Temple at *Jeruſalem*, *Eleazar* treated the King's Commiſſioners with all due Honour and Acknowledgment, and then diſmiſſed them with good Wiſhes and Preſents, to return to their Maſter.

The King had no ſooner heard of their Arrival at *Alexandria*, and that they had brought the ſeventy Elders with them, than he ſent for his two Embaſſadors, *Andreas* and *Ariſtæus*, from whom he received *Eleazar's* Let-

Letter, and particular Satisfaction to many Queſtions relating thereunto. His mind was ſo bent upon an immediate Conference with the ſeventy Perſons that were ſent over to him to interpret the Laws, that no Perſon had Acceſs to him upon any particular Buſineſs, which was contrary to his uſual Cuſtom of giving private Audience once in five Days, and publick once a Month.

Having thus ſecured himſelf from any of thoſe caſual Interruptions, he waited the Arrival of *Eleazar*'s Agents, who attended him ſoon after with Preſents from the High Prieſt, and certain Manuſcripts of the Jewiſh Laws, written upon Parchment in Golden Letters.

Upon the King's aſking for the Books, they were produced to his Admiration at the Curioſity of the Work; for the Leaves were ſo artificially put together, that there was no diſcerning where one Skin was joined to another. His Majeſty at the ſame Time telling them, that he had a great Reſpect for the Perſon that brought him that Piece of exquiſite Workmanſhip, and a greater yet for him that ſent it; but the greateſt Reverence of all for the Author of thoſe Laws that were now produced.

The Deputies and their Aſſiſtants gave the King with one Heart and Voice ſuch moving Inſtances, by their joint Prayers and Acclamations, of their Zeal for their glorious Inſtitution for the Service, that he could not forbear Weeping at the Tenderneſs of their Reſpect.

The Writings were then put into the Hands of the Officers that were to have them in Charge, and the King embracing the Deputies, told them, that he would only in the firſt Place ſpeak a Word or two to the Buſineſs they came about, and after that take their perſons into his peculiar Care; as he looked upon the Day of their arrival as ſo great a Providence to him, he reſolved to have it obſerved all the Days of his Life, as an Anniverſary Feſtival in Commemoration of the Bleſſing. And it happened to fall out upon the very Day of his Naval Victory over *Antigonus*.

The King, in fine, told them that they ſhould be his Gueſts, and ordered them the moſt magnificent Apartments in his own Palace.

The Care of entertaining and providing for ſtrangers was properly *Nicanor*'s Province, who appointed *Dorotheus* under him in this, as in other Caſes, to ſee that every Thing was conducted with Decorum.

It was a Maxim with this Prince always to entertain Strangers according to the Cuſtoms and Manners of their reſpective Countries; Orders were therefore given that the Elders ſhould be ſtrictly treated according to this Rule.

The Conduct of their Entertainment was therefore committed to *Dorotheus*, as a perſon well verſed in the Manner and Cuſtoms of the Jews.

There were, in the firſt Place, two Seats, one on the King's right Hand, the other on his left, by his own Or-

der, with all becoming Deference to the Commiſſioners.

When the Gueſts had taken their Places, the King bad *Dorotheus* ſerve them after the ſame Manner, as he had formerly ſerved their Countrymen upon the like occaſion; ſo that the *Egyptian* Prieſts and Officers that uſually attended the King upon theſe Occaſions, were all diſcharged; one of their own Deputies and Prieſts, *Eliſa* by Name, was called upon by the King himſelf to pronounce the Benediction, upon the Table, who thereupon ſtood up to give God Thanks; after which Solemnity, and a fervent Prayer for the Happineſs of the King, and his People, to the infinite Satisfaction of all that were preſent, the Company fell chearfully to the Fare that was provided for them.

The King took Occaſion while they were at Dinner, to ſtart ſeveral Philoſophical Queſtions to paſs from one Subject to another, in order to ſound their Judgment and Experience. The Commiſſioners were pertient to every Point, that the King took great Delight in their Converſation, ſo that they continued feaſting and rejoycing for the Space of twelve Days. *

The Excellency of their Judgment had wonderful Effect, not only upon the King, but brought over *Menedemus* the Philoſopher to acknowledge an over-ruling Providence, and to put a final End to that Controverſy; the King acknowledging himſelf to be ſo exceedingly edified by the converſing with theſe People, that they had inſtructed him in the very Art of Government, and therefore ordered them a Gratuity of three Talents a Man; and then they were conducted to their reſpective Apartments.

At the End of three Days, *Demetrius* took them with him by a Cauſeway of ſeven Furlongs in length, and a Bridge of Communication between the Iſland and the Continent, and advancing from thence Northward, ſettled them in a Houſe by the Sea-Side, where they might be free from Noiſe or Diſturbance. The Retreat, in fine, being very commodious for Men of Study and Contemplation. When they were diſpoſed of in this commodious Manner, he requeſted of them, that they would immediately apply to the Interpretation, bidding them God's Speed, in the arduous Undertaking.

They ſpared neither Care nor Pains, but kept cloſe to their Studies from Day-break till three in the Afternoon, which was their Time of Refreſhment. *Dorotheus* not forgetting, according to the King's Order, to ſupply them with Delicacies from his own Table, over and above a Competency of Proviſions at the King's ordinary Allowance.

* If any Perſon is diſpoſed to know the Particulars of this Event, we refer him to a Book of *Ariſtæus*, expreſly writ upon this Subject.

It

It was their Cuſtom to wait upon the King every Morning at his Levee, and thence to betake themſelves to their Taſk again, waſhing their Hands with Sea Water, before they entered upon their Buſineſs.

This Verſion of the Law was finiſhed within the Compaſs of ſeventy two Days, at the Expiration of which, *Demetrius* called all the Jews together into the Place where it was tranſlated, and in the Preſence of the Interpreters, read over the Book, the Aſſembly unanimouſly approving of the Interpretation, and extolling *Demetrius* as the Occaſion of the great Advantages they had received.

He alſo deſired that it might be read by the eminent Men of the Nation. And after this the High Prieſt, the Elders, and the Magiſtrates of the People propoſed, That ſince the Tranſaction was ſo happily finiſhed, the Authority of it might be ratified, and the Text remain unalterable for ever.

They alſo came to an unanimous Reſolution, That the Book ſhould be ſubjected to a farther Examination and Reviſe. And if there ſhould be found any Thing in it, either Redundant or Defective, it might, upon mature Conſideration, be rectified. But that upon a farther Approbation, it ſhould ſtand good for ever.

The King was hereby doubly pleaſed; firſt, for the gaining of his Point; and, ſecondly, that it ſucceeded ſo happily to the Advantage of the Public.

But when he came to hear it read to him, he was tranſported with Joy, in the Contemplation of the Wiſdom of the Law-Giver, and entered into a Diſcourſe with *Demetrius*, in which he declared his firm Perſuaſion, that neither any Hiſtorian nor Poet could ever frame ſuch incomparable Laws.

Demetrius made anſwer, That the Form of them being ſo manifeſtly Divine, and the Subject of them ſo Venerable, People were afraid of meddling with them, eſpecially conſidering what Judgments had befallen ſeveral People for their Temerity in prophaning them; as *Theopompus*, acting a Part of a Plagiary, in publiſhing Texts of Holy Writ as his own Invention, was ſtruck with a fit of Madneſs that held him thirty Days; and in the Intervals of his Phrenzy, was conſcious of the Sin, and asked God Forgiveneſs for it, having Revelations alſo in his Sleep that it was his audacious Curioſity, in confounding ſacred Things with prophane, that brought this Diſtemper upon him.

But, in fine, upon his Repentance, and Amendment, he was reſtored again to his right Mind. And ſo it fared likewiſe with *Theodectus* the Poet, who was ſtruck blind upon the intermixing of Divine Writ with Tradegy, was, upon the Acknowledgment of his Sin, reſtored to his Sight again.

The King upon the Receipt of theſe Books from *Demetrius*, bleſſed God and worſhipped, giving a ſtrict Command for the preſerving of them ſafe and entire; deſiring the Interpreters alſo, that he might ſee them again

again as often as they could upon a Viſit; aſſuring them, that it ſhould turn to their Honour as well as their Advantage.

He was obliged at preſent, he ſaid, to part with them; but whenever they ſhould come hereafter for their Pleaſure, they ſhould not fail of ſuch an Acknowledgment as might become wiſe Men to receive, and a great Prince to give.

Upon this the King diſmiſſed them with a Preſent to each of them, of three rich Suits of Raiment, * two Talents of Gold, the Value of one Talent in Cups; Couches to ſit and eat upon, with Preſents likewiſe for the High Prieſt, of ten Beds with Silver Feet, and Suits of Furniture belonging to them; a Chalice of thirty Talents, ten purple Robes, a glorious Crown and a hundred Pieces of fine Linen, beſides Cups and Gobleſs of ſeveral Sorts, and two Golden Veſſels, dedicated to the Service of the Temple; deſiring the High Prieſt by Letter, that if any of theſe Commiſſioners ſhould be diſpoſed to reviſit him in any future Time, he would grant them his Permiſſion, as he had a high Eſteem for the Converſation of learned Men, and could not think his Favour better beſtowed than upon ſo venerable a Body.

* Two *Egyptian* Talents, for ſuch we ſuppoſe to be here meant, in Gold is worth ſeven thouſand three hundred Pounds, *Engliſh* Money.

CHAP. III.

Various Inſtances of Reſpect from the moſt potent Prince of the Eaſt towards the Jews. Their Cauſes eſpouſed by the Romans. *Their various Fortunes.* Joſeph, *the Son of* Onias, *diſtinguiſhes himſelf on divers Accounts, and brings his Countrymen the Jews into great Repute and Eſtimation.*

THE Jews were in great Eſteem among the Kings of *Aſia*, both for their Fidelity and Skill in military Affairs, inſomuch that *Seleucus*, ſurnamed *Nicanor*, gave them the Privileges of Freemen in all the Cities he built throughout *Aſia*, and the lower *Syria*; nay, in the Metropolis of *Antioch*, declaring it to be his Will and Pleaſure, that they ſhould enjoy the ſame Rights and Immunities with the *Greeks* and *Macedonians*.

As for Example, The Jews being interdicted the Uſe of foreign Oil, the Olympic Officers, who had the ordering of that Affair, were obliged by the Government to allow them ſo much Money in lieu of it.

The People of *Antioch* inſiſted upon the abrogating of that Cuſtom the following War. But *Mutianus*, who was then Governor of the Province of *Syria*, would not ſuffer it.

In the Reign of *Veſpaſian*, and his

Son

Son *Titus*, the People of *Alexandria* would have had the Jews disfranchiſed: but ſuch was the Honour and Juſtice of the Romans, and eſpecially of thoſe two magnanimous Princes before-mentioned, that they could not obtain it; not that they wanted either Pretence or Provocation for a Revenge upon a People who had long annoyed them, by a troubleſome War, and ſo obſtinate a Rebellion. But they looked upon their Rites and Priviledges to be ſtill ſacred; and therefore refuſed to gratify either their own Paſſions, or the Importunity of two great Nations with any vindictive Act of Injuſtice.

They laid more Weght upon the Senſe of their ancient Merits, than upon that of their preſent Miſdemeanor, and would not do a mean Thing, to promote the moſt conſiderable Intereſt.

They obſerved, that thoſe who had taken up Arms againſt the Romans had ſuffered enough by the Calamities of War, without any other Forfeiture; and that to puniſh thoſe who had not offended, would be offering Violence to common Senſe and Juſtice. *

Under the Reign of *Antiochus* the Great, *Aſia*, *Judea*, and *Celo-Syria*, were involved in perpetual Broils; for *Antiochus* being at that Time in actual Hoſtility with *Philopator Ptolemy*, and his Son *Ptolemy*, ſurnamed *Epiphanes*. The Jews between the proſperous and adverſe Fortune of *Antiochus*, were ſtill ſure to be Sufferers, tho' *Antiochus*, in the End, prevailed, and made himſelf Maſter of *Judea*.

In proceſs of Time, after the Death of *Philopator*, his Son ſent a great Army into *Celo-Syria*, under the Command of *Scopas*, at the Head of the River *Jordan*, and recovered the Places in *Celo-Syria* and *Samaria*, which *Scopas* had got Poſſeſſion of before.

The Jews upon this Succeſs ſurrendered themſelves, received the Army into their City, provided plentifully for the Elephants, and valiently aſſiſted in the Attack of the Caſtle, where *Scopas* had left a Body of Men in Garriſon.

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* We read likewiſe to the ſame Purpoſe of *Marcus Agrippa*'s good Affection to the *Jews*, for when the *Jonians*, in a ſeditious Animoſity againſt thoſe People, went to them with a Remonſtrance, that their City being ſingly and entirely their own, by the Gift of *Antiochus* the Grandſon of *Seleucus*, whom the *Grecians* ſirnamed the God, they deſired to be put in Poſſeſſion of it with peculiar Privileges, excluſive of all other People; demanding farther, that if the *Jews* ſhould pretend to the ſame Immunities, it might be upon condition of their worſhipping the ſame Gods. The *Jews* brought the Queſtion to an Iſſue, *Nicholaus* of *Damaſcus* being of their Council, who obtained Judgment for them in favour of the Right they claim'd to the free Exerciſe and Enjoyment of their own Laws and Cuſtoms; *Agrippa* pronouncing upon the whole Matter, that he could not agree to any innovation upon that Point.

Thoſe who would be farther ſatisfied in the Series of this Tranſaction, may read the whole Story at large in *Nicholaus*'s Hiſtory. B. 123, 124.

Antiochus thought it but reaſonable to gratify the Jews with ſome honourable Token of the Senſe he had of their Goodwill and Services upon this Occaſion, and therefore wrote to ſuch of his Friends and Officers as were Witneſſes of the Obligations they had lain upon him; giving them to underſtand in the ſaid Letters, what kind of Requital he intended to make them.

As a Proof of the Eſteem which *Antiochus* retained for the Jewiſh Nation, we deem it neceſſary to inſert the following Letter.

King Antiochus *to* Ptolemy, *greeting.*

WHereas we have received ſeveral Inſtances of the good Diſpoſition and Affection of the Jews toward us and our Service, from the Time of our firſt coming into their Country, which they have expreſſed by their Magnificience, and Reſpect of their Elders and Magiſtrates, in attending us upon the Way, the ſplendid Reception of our Perſon and Army into the City, and the ample Proviſion they made, both for our Horſes and Elephants, aſſiſting us likewiſe againſt the Garriſon of the Egyptians *in the Caſtle. Theſe good Offices being duly conſidered, we eſteem ourſelves bound in Honour to beſtow upon them ſome diſtinguiſhing Marks of our Acknowledgment and Eſteem, by contributing toward the Repairing of their miſerable City, and reſtoring it to its former State of Magnificence and Glory, by recalling all their Countrymen, wherever diſtreſſed, to their former Habitations.*

In Order to the Accompliſhment of thoſe Ends, we have in the firſt Place aſſigned tweny thouſand Pieces of Silver toward the Charges of their Sacrifices, Wine Oil and Frankincenſe; and for fine Flour, according to the Cuſtom of the Place, one thouſand four hundred and ſixty Meaſures of Wheat, and three hundred ſeventy five Meaſures of Salt.

And farther, it is our Will and Pleaſure, that all this may be executed and made good according to our Order. And then for any thing that may be wanted toward the Repairing of the Temple, Porch or Galleries.

It is our Deſire, that the Timber be ſupplied, whether from Judea, Libanon, *or any other Place, without any Tax or Duty.*

And we do alſo grant, that the ſame Immunity for other Materials, that may be made Uſe of for the Holy Temple, with Permiſſion moreover of an univerſal Liberty to live and govern themſelves according to their Country Laws.

And we do hereby reſpectively diſcharge their Elders, Prieſts, Scribes, and Singingmen, of Poll-taxes, royal Duties, and of all other Tributes whatſoever.

And for a farther Encouragement to the ſpeedy re-peopleing of this City, we do by our Royal Authority grant unto all the Inhabitants of the ſame, and to ſuch others, as may come to reſide there, at any Time between this and the Month of Hyperberetæus next ne-

enſuing, a total Exemption from all publick Impoſitions for the Space of three Years to come; and ſo likewiſe from that Time forward, an Abatement of one third Part of all Taxes, in conſideration of their paſt Damages and Sufferings.

And finally, whereas great Numbers of thoſe People have been carryed away Captive, and remain to this Day in Bondage, we do farther Command, that they be forthwith ſet at Liberty, with ample Reſtitution, for what had been taken from them.

Nor did this benevolent Prince ſtop here, but follow'd his generous Declaration in Favour of the People, with another Edict, which he caus'd to be publiſh'd all over his Dominions, in Subſtance as follows: *That no Stranger ſhall preſume to enter into the Temple, but with the Conſent of the* Jews, *and without being puriſy'd and qualify'd before his Admittance, according to the Laws of the Country: that no Man ſhall dare to bring into the City, the Fleſh either of Horſes or Mules, or of Aſſes, wild or tame; the Fleſh of Panthers, Foxes, Hares, or of any other Creatures that the* Jews *are not allow'd ſo much as to touch not the Skins of any of them; nor to bring up, or feed any of theſe, or any other Creatures in the City, but ſuch as their Forefathers, according to God's Appointment, made uſe of for Sacrifices, upon the Penalty of three thouſand Drachmas, to be levy'd upon every Offender againſt the ſaid Orders, for the Uſe and Benefit of the Prieſts.*

This King alſo upon another eminent occaſion gave the World a ſignal Proof of the high eſteem he had for the *Jews*.

Upon the breaking out of a Commotion in *Phrygia* and *Lydia*, *Zeuxes* at the Time commanding an Army in the upland Provinces, the King preſently ordered this General, a Perſon for whom he had a ſingular Reſpect, to ſend away from *Babylon*, ſuch a Number of the *Jews* there, into *Phrygia*, giving him his Inſtructions in a Letter to this Effect:

The King *Antiochus* to *Zeuxes*, his Friend and Father, greeting.

WHEREAS I am given to underſtand, that there are ſeveral Perſons who ſtrive to raiſe Seditions and make Innovations in Phrygia *and* Lydia, *it behoves me to provide againſt ſuch Caſualties; ſo that I am now to acquaint you that I am adviſed by my Counſels and Friends, to take two thouſand* Jewiſh *Families out of* Babylon *and* Meſopotamia, *and to tranſport them into* Phrygia, *with their Goods and whatever belongs to them, and there to Place them for a Guard in ſtrong Holds and Garriſons, being thoroughly perſuaded of their Zeal and Fidelity; not only from the Principles of their Religion, but from the Proof and Experience of their Allegiance to my Anceſters.*

Wherefore, it is my Pleaſure that they be forthwith tranſplanted; giving them all Aſſurance, that they ſhall ſtill enjoy the Freedom of their own Laws and Cuſtoms.

Upon their Arrival there, you are

to

to assign them Lands and Possessions, with all Conveniencies for Building, Planting and Tillage; with an Immunity also from all Taxes and Contributions, out of the Profits for ten Years to come.

In the mean While, till they may be able to support themselves out of the Fruits of their own industry, you are to allow them a Competent Provision of Wheat, for the Maintenance of themselves and their Families; by which kind Usage they will be encouraged to act more chearfully in our Service. You are finally to take Care, that they be not exposed to any Sort of Trouble or Molestation.

This is to shew what Esteem *Antiochus* the Great had for the *Jews*; After which, there followed a League of Amity and Alliance between this King and *Ptolemy*, upon a Marriage, with his Daughter *Cleopatra*, who had in Lieu of a Portion, *Celo-Syria*, *Phenice*, *Judas* and *Samaria*. The Revenue was divided between the two Kings, and farmed to some of the principal Men in the respective Provinces, who took Care of the Collections, and paid their Proportions into the King's Treasury, according to the Contract.

The *Samaritans* were at this Time haughty and powerful, and particularly troublesome in their Inroads upon the *Jews*; carrying several of them away Captives; and this Ravage was committed chiefly in the Time of the high Priest *Onias*: For after the Death of *Eleazar*, his Uncle *Manasses* assumed the Pontification; and after his Death, succeeded *Onias*, the Son of *Simon* the Just; which *Simon* was the Brother of *Eleazar*.

This *Onias* was weak and covetous, to the excessive Degree of refusing the King the Customary Tribute of twenty Talents, which his Ancestors still paid him, in Acknowledgment of their Allegiance. This Behaviour of *Onias*, incensed *Ptolemy Euergetes* the Father of *Philopator* to such a Degree, that he sent an Ambassador expresly to *Jerusalem*, with a Menace to Demand the Payment of it, upon the Peril of having an Army quartered upon their Country at Discretion, and a new Plantation settled there, if they did not immediately comply. This Message gave the *Jews* most terrible Apprehensions; but *Onias* braved the Danger, his Heart being wholly devoted in Avarice and only set upon Money.

Onias had a Nephew, whose Name was *Joseph*, the Son of *Tobias*, who though a young Man acquired great Reputation among the *Jews*, for his Justice and Prudence and Integrity. Being on a certain Occasion at *Phicola*, the Place of his Birth, his Mother sent him an Account of the Messenger beforementioned, and of his Business, informing him that he had inveighed against *Onias* from endangering the publick Peace, and not attending to the Interest and Welfare of the People, to whom he stood indebted for his Promotion, both sacerdotal and civil.

But however, if his Heart was so possessed by Avarice, that he would sacrifice his Country, Friends and all, ra-

rather than part with his Money, he adviſed him to make a dutiful Application to the King about it, and to try if he could get the Whole, or at leaſt ſome part of it remitted. *Onias* made Anſwer, that he was not ſo fond of his Place either in Church or State, but he could willingly part with both, if it were permitted him, rather than go to the King upon that Errand; and that for his part he would not concern himſelf in the Matter.

Upon the Refuſal of *Onias*, *Joſeph* aſked pemiſſion to attend, and being granted his Requeſt; he went up to the Temple, where he called a Congregation, and bad them take Courage for he was in Hope that the Failure of his Uncle would have no further ill Conſequence; telling them, That if they thought fit, he would wait upon the King himſelf in their Name, and do his utmoſt to reconcile Matters between them. The whole Multitude gave him Thanks for the Propoſal, and left the Buſineſs entirely to his Management.

Joſeph, upon this, went his Way to find out the King's Commiſſioner; and when he had treated him ſplendidly for ſome certain Days, and made him rich Preſents, diſmiſſed him to his Maſter, with an Aſſurance that he would preſently follow him.

Joſeph's Heart was now ſet more and more upon the Expedition, being not only encouraged and invited to it by the King's Meſſenger, but aſſured alſo of the beſt Service he could do him; who made no Doubt at all, but that upon ſuch an Application *Joſeph* might probably gain his Point.

This Perſon was greatly pleaſed with the Addreſs of the young Man; and upon his Return into *Egypt*, reflecting upon the Ingratitude of *Onias*, he took Care to ſpeak greatly in Commendation of *Joſeph*, who had generouſly taken the Office upon himſelf, to atone for the Indolence and Inattention of his Uncle.

In ſhort, this Miniſter was ſo taken up with the Subjects of *Joſeph*'s Character, that the King and his Wife *Cleopatra*, were in a Manner enamoured with him before they ſaw him.

Upon this Occaſion, *Joſeph* ſent to his Friends in *Samaria* to take up Money for his Equipage; which in Cloaths, Horſes, Carriages, Plate, and other Neceſſaries, amounted to twenty thouſand Drachma's.

He happened in his Way to *Alexandria*, to fall in Company with a Train of the Princes and Nobility of *Syria* and *Phenicia*, who were at that Time on their Way to the King, in Order to treat with him about his Revenue, according to a Yearly Cuſtom of putting it up by Way of Auction to the higheſt Bidder.

Theſe great Men ridiculed the contemptible Appearance of *Joſeph* and his Retinue; and he proceeded on his Way to *Alexandria*; and being there informed that the King was ſtill at *Memphis*, proſecuted his Journey, and had the good Fortune to meet him ſitting in his Chariot with the Queen, and his particular Confident *Athenion*, in his return to *Alexandria*.

This *Athenion* was the Perſon who carried the Embaſſy to *Jeruſalem*, and was ſo honourably treated by *Joſeph* in that Place. He therefore no ſooner caſt his Eyes upon the *Hebrew*, than he informed the King that he was the very Perſon of whom he had ſpoken ſo many excellent Things at his Return from *Jeruſalem*.

Ptolemy upon this ſtopped and ſaluted him, and took him into his Chariot; complaining upon the firſt greeting, how ill he had been uſed by *Onias*.

Sir (ſaid *Joſeph*, by way of Apology) *an old Man is the ſecond Time a Child, and I hope your Majeſty will impute nothing to* Onias *beyond that Infirmity. But for the young Men that are in their Vigour of Strength and Underſtanding, I dare be anſwerable for it, that you ſhall not find any one of us wanting in his Duty.*

The King was ſo delighted with this inſtance of *Joſeph*'s Diſcretion and Reſpect, upon this firſt Interview, that he gave Orders immediately for lodging him in his own Palace, and entertaining of him at his own Table; which ſingular Reſpect gave no ſmall diſguſt to the envious *Syrian* Noblemen, when they obſerved at *Alexandria* the Honour that was done to *Joſeph*.

The Day of Auction now arrived, when the ſeveral Branches of the Revenue were to be put up, and the Nobility of each reſpective Province to bid for the Purchaſe. At length they contracted for eight thouſand Talents upon the Duties of *Celo-Syria*, *Phenice*, *Judea* and *Samaria*.

Joſeph blamed the Contractors for undervaluing the Compoſition, and offered to double the Sum propoſed. The King pleaſed with the Offer, and well diſpoſed toward *Joſeph*, demanded of him, what Security he could give to the Performance of his Agreement?

Joſeph reply'd, that he could give him the Security of Perſons beyond all Exception and upon the King's bidding him name them, his Anſwer was, That he doubted not, but his Majeſty, and the Queen would be mutually bound for his Honeſty.

The King was ſo well ſatisfied with this ingenious Way of proceeding, that he intruſted him with his Revenue upon his own Word, without any other Sureties.

This ſurpriſing Preference of a Stranger, greatly diſguſted the reſt of the Contracters, who were much diſpleaſed at being obliged to depart without their Errand.

Joſeph, upon having ſo great Truſt repoſed in him, deſired a Guard of two thouſand Soldiers to Support him in the collecting of the Duty, in caſe of any Oppoſition; which Guard was granted him. And having thereupon borrowed five hundred Talents of the King's Friends in *Alexandria*, he went into *Syria*.

Upon his arrived at *Aſkalon*, and demanding the King's Tribute, they not only refuſed him the Money, but inſolently reviled him, ſo that he pre-

preſently cauſed his Soldiers to take up twenty of the Ringleaders, and inflicted exemplary Puniſhment upon them; raiſing a thouſand Talents out of their forfeited Eſtates, and ſent the Treaſure to the King, with a particular Account of what had been done.

The King ſo highly approved of the wiſe and diſcreet Conduct of *Joſeph*, that he entruſted him after that to do whatever he thought fit. This recent Examples of his Severity upon the People of *Aſkalon*, wrought ſo effectually upon the reſt of the *Syrians*, that they ſet their Gates open in all Places to *Joſeph*; and without any Difficulty or Scruple, paid their Taxes.

The Inhabitants of *Scythopolis* followed the Example of *Aſkalon*, in obſtinately refuſing of their cuſtomary Impoſitions, and contemning the King's Officers and Authority; ſo that *Joſeph* was forced to deal with the Ringleaders there, as he had done before, upon the like Occaſion, accounting it a Point of Wiſdom to ſecure what they had got, and to make their Country maintain itſelf.

At length, *Joſeph* having done great Honour to his Country, and fully evinced his Moderation, Piety and Juſtice, paid the Debt of Nature, to the great Regret of the Jews, to whoſe Relief and Welfare he had ſo eminently contributed.

He executed a Commiſſion of Receiver of all public Duties in *Syria*, *Phenice* and *Samaria*, for the Space of two and twenty Years.

His Uncle *Onias* died alſo about the ſame Time, and his Son *Simon* ſucceeded him to the Prieſthood; and upon his Demiſe, was ſucceeded by his Son, who was likewiſe named *Onias*.

CHAP. IV.

The King of Lacedemon *claims Kindred with the Jews, and ſeeks Alliance with* Onias. *Various Events befal the Nation of the Jews. Demolition of the Temple. Apoſtacy of great Numbers of the Jews.*

ON the Succeſſion of *Onias*, the Son of *Simon*, to the Pontificate, *Arius*, King of the *Lacedemonians*, ſought the Friendſhip and Alliance of the Jews, in an Ambaſſy couched in the following Terms.

Arius *King of the* Lacedemonians *to* Onias, *Health.*

WHereas there is come to our Hand an ancient Manuſcript, ſetting forth the near Affinity between our Anceſtors and yours, and the Relation in which we ſtand to the Line of Abraham; *it is but reaſonable for Brethren ſo nearly allied, to do all good Offices one toward another.*

This is therefore to offer you the Command of any Thing within our Power to ſerve you, as we ourſelves ſhall take the Freedom in looking upon your Concerns as our own, and joining in one common Intereſt.

You

You are to receive this Letter from our Truſty Subject and Servant Demoteles, *written in a Quarto Page, and ſealed with the Figure of an Eagle holding a Dragon in her Talons.*

After the Death of *Joſeph*, the People broke out into Mutinies and Seditions, upon the Quarrel of the Sons that he had left behind him; the elder Brothers making War upon the younger. The major Part of the People appearing alſo in Favour of the Former; and, among the reſt, *Simon* the High Prieſt, upon Account of his Relation.

His Son *Hyrcanus* did not think fit to return to *Jeruſalem*, but kept himſelf ſtill beyond *Jordan*, where he maintained a perpetual War with the *Arabians*, killing great Numbers of them, and carrying others into Captivity. He cauſed a marvellous ſtrong Caſtle to be erected there; the Walls, from the Bottom to the Top, being all of white Stone, with Figures upon them of ſeveral Sorts of Creatures, of an extraordinary Size and Proportion.

This Building was encompaſſed with a deep Ditch, or Moat, and Vaults cut out through a Mountain juſt oppoſite to it, of ſeveral Furlongs in length, and only broad enough at the Mouth for one Man to enter at a Time, which they did both for Fear and Security.

There were alſo in this Caſtle Places for Entertainment and Lodging; Variety of Fountains, both for Pleaſure and Ornament; large Courts, ſtately Buildings, and ſpacious Gardens; to this Place thus elegantly compleated he gave the Name of *Tyre*, which lies upon the Borders of *Arabia* and *Judea* beyond *Jordan*, and not far from the Country of the *Eſſebonites*. *Hyrcanus* held this Government for the Space of ſeven Years; during which *Seleucus* reign'd in *Syria*. After his Death his Brother *Antiochus*, otherwiſe called *Epiphanes*, ſucceeded him, at which Time died *Ptolemy* alſo, King of *Egpyt*, who was likewiſe called *Epiphanes*.

This *Ptolemy* left two Sons behind him, both of them Minors; the Name of the Elder was *Philometor*, and the Name of the other *Phyſcon*. *Antiochus* was at that Time very ſtrong and powerful; inſomuch, that *Hyrcanus*, for fear of being called to an Account for his Inroads upon the *Arabians*, laid violent Hands upon himſelf, and *Antiochus* took Poſſeſſion of all his Goods and Eſtate.

Onias the high Prieſt dying about this Time, *Antiochus Epiphanes* advanced his Brother *Jeſus* to the Pontificate, his own Son being at that Time a Minor. This *Jeſus* fell under the King's Diſpleaſure, who depoſed him from the Pontificate, and transferred it afterward to *Onias* the younger Brother. Now theſe were the three Sons of *Symon*, and they all arrived to the Dignity of the Prieſthood; but *Jeſus* choſe rather to take upon himſelf the Name of *Jaſon*, as the other changed his Name for *Menelaus*.

In this confuſed State of Things, one Brother advanced a Faction againſt the

the other, and the People divided upon it. The Sons of *Tobias* ſided with the new high Prieſt *Menelaus*; but the greater Part of the Multitude joined with *Jaſon*, and ſo much overpowered the other, that *Menelaus* and the Sons of *Tobias* withdrew to *Antioch*, declaring themſelves that they would no longer be tied up to their Country's Laws and Inſtitutions, but go over to the Religion of their King, and the *Greek* Way of Worſhip; deſiring Liberty to erect a Kind of Academy, or Place for publick Exerciſes in *Jeruſalem*. Upon the obtaining of this Licence, they ſo diſguiſed their Bodies, that even naked, there was no viſible Difference between them and the *Greeks*, at the ſame Time caſting off all regard to the *Jewiſh* Laws and Cuſtoms, and betaking themſelves to Manners of other Nations.

Antiochus finding himſelf at this Time ſo eaſy at Home, and his People ſo well ſettled, reſolved to try an Expedition into *Egypt*, partly from an Ambition to make himſelf Maſter of the Country, and partly from a Reliance on the Weakneſs and Inability of *Ptolemy*'s Sons, to manage ſuch a War; ſo that he advanced with a mighty Army to *Peluſium*, where he circumvented *Philometor* by Craft, and advanced into *Egypt*, and from thence to *Memphis*, and other neigbouring Places, which he likewiſe reduced; and then proceeded to *Alexandria*, with a Deſign to reduce at once both the King and the City; but upon the peremptory Command of the *Romans*, to withdraw his Army immediately, at his Peril, he gave over his Deſign, and betook himſelf to his Country, and quitted what he taken, as we have ſaid heretofore.

Antiochus, at his Return from *Egypt*, from whence he was affrighted by the Menaces of the Romans, marched with his Army to *Jeruſalem*, and entered the City, in the hundred and forty third Year, from the Time that the Kingdom of *Syria* fell into the Family of *Seleucus*.

He made himſelf Maſter of it without any Difficulty; for the Gates were ſet open to him, by the Treachery of a Party he made in the Town, where he exerciſed great Cruelty, and put many People to the Sword, without Regard to Sex or Age, pillaged the City, and carried the Treaſure away to *Antioch*.

This Calamity happened in the ſecond Year after the taking of the City, in the hundredth and fortieth Year from the firſt *Seleucus*. In this furious Outrage, they did not ſpare even thoſe who quietly opened the Gates to them, for the greater Liberty of breaking in upon the Riches of the Temple, where the Spoil was ſo conſiderable, that the Value, they thought, might in ſome Degree atone for the Treachery.

In ſhort, the Temple was wholly ſtripped and rifled, all the holy Veſſels and Utenſils were taken away; nay, the very Hiding-places, where they concealed an immenſe Treaſure, were all laid open, and not ſo much

as any Relicks left of this prodigious Wealth. And farther, to conſummate the Miſery of theſe poor People, their daily Sacrifices were forbidden, the City levelled with the Ground, the Inhabitants partly killed, partly carried away Captives, together with their Wives and Children, to the Number of ten thouſand; their Walls demoliſhed, and their ſtately Edifices conſumed by Fire.

He erected a Tower in the City that overlooked and commanded the Temple itſelf; and when he had ſupplied and fortified the Place, put a ſtrong Garriſon of *Macedonians* into it, but not without a Mixture of execrable and apoſtate Jews, that were as malicious as the very worſt of their Enemies.

He raiſed an Altar in the Temple, and ſacrificed Hoggs upon it, in a moſt ſpiteful Contradiction to the Laws and Conſtitutions of the Jews.

He forced all People to Extremities, who would not renounce the true God, and worſhip his Idols. And ſo in all other Cities and Towns, he built Temples and Altars for the Daily Sacrifice of Swines Fleſh.

He made it a moſt grievous Penalty for any Jew to circumciſe their Children, keeping Informers, either to proſecute, or extort from them an Obedience by Terror or Force, ſo that the major Part of the Jews, either by their own Accord, or Fear of Puniſhment, comply'd with theſe Orders, though ſome ſtood bravely againſt all Trials of Torment, and Death itſelf, rather than depart from their Religion and Laws. Some had their Bodies cut and torn with Whips, and then crucified alive, with their Wives, and ſo many of their Children as were circumciſed, hanging about their Necks, according to the King's Order. The Holy Scriptures were deſtroyed alſo wherever they were found; and it was made Death ſo much as to entertain them.

The *Samaritans*, conformable to the character we have before given of them, when they found the Jews reduced to ſo miſerable a ſtate of diſtreſs, for Fear of being brought to bear a Share in their Calamities, immediately diſclaimed all Kindred with them, diſowning the Temple of *Garizin* for the Temple of God; and alledging themſelves to be the Race (as indeed they were) of the *Medes* and *Perſians*.

To enforce the Belief of which, and in order to take of the Danger, apprehended upon this Occaſion, they ſent a ſolemn Embaſſy and Addreſs to *Antiochus*, in theſe Terms.

To King Antiochus Epiphanes, *the illuſtrious god, the humble Petition of the* Sidonians, *Inhabitants of* Sichem, *ſheweth,*

THAT *the Forefathers of your Petitioners, lying under the Affliction of many and grievous Plagues in their own Country, were partly wrought upon by that Calamity, and in*

in Part prevailed upon by the Superſtition of an ancient Cuſtom, to join in the religious Obſervance of a certain Feſtival, which the Jews call the Sabbath, and in the erecting of the Temple upon the Mountain Garizin, *where Sacrifices were offered to a God without a Name.*

Now, that your Majeſty hath been pleaſed to inflict a Puniſhment upon this wicked People, ſuitable to the Heinouſneſs of their Offences, and to appoint Officers, who upon a Suppoſition that we were of the ſame Stock, are thereby induced to involve your Petitioners with the Jews in the ſame Crime; whereas we derive our Original from the Sidonians, *as we can can make appear by Record, extant to this Day.*

May it pleaſe your Majeſty, to grant ſuch Order to Apollonius *our Governor, in Favour of your Petitioners, that they may not be any farther moleſted for the Future, upon the Suſpicion of any Correſpondency with the Jews, to whom we are as much Strangers in our Manners, as in our Extraction.*

And we do farther pray, that the Temple which hath ſtood hitherto without any Dedication, may from this Time forward be called the Temple of Jupiter *of* Greece, *to the End, that when we ſhall live in more Security and Freedom, as to the Government of our own private Affairs, we may the better attend thoſe Duties in the Advancement of your Service and Revenue.*

In anſwer to this Requeſt of the *Samaritans*, the King wrote back as followeth.

King Antiochus *to* Nicanor.

HAVING received a Petition from the Sidonians *at* Sichem, *which we have here annexed to this Letter; this is to let you underſtand, that it appeareth unto us, upon the Information of the Bearers thereof, that the* Sidonians *are no Way guilty of the Crimes charged upon the Jews; but on the contrary, that they govern themſelves according to the Way and Faſhion of the Greeks.*

Wherefore it is our Will and Pleaſure that they receive no further Trouble about the Matter. And to what concerns the Temple, it is our Will alſo, That from this Time forward it may be known and diſtinguiſhed by the Name of Jupiter *of* Greece. *We have written to the ſame Effect alſo to our Governor* Apollonius. *Dated in the forty ſixth Year, and the eleventh Day of the Month.*

There lived at this Time in *Modim*, a Village in *Judea*, one *Matthias* a Prieſt of the Family of *Joarib*, and a Native of *Jeruſalem*. This Perſon, being of a pious Diſpoſition, would frequently condole, with his Sons, on Account of the deplorable State of the Jewiſh Nation, their City being laid deſolate, their Temple pillaged and prophaned, with many other Calamities. He would obſerve, how

how much more glorious it would be to fall a Sacrifice to the Laws and Religion of their Country, than to linger out a miſerable Life in this ſervile Manner.

When the King's Officers entered the Village, to enforce the Execution of their Maſter's Orders, they began to tamper with *Matthias*, as a Perſon of Authority, and one who might be a leading Example to all the reſt.

They laid before him the Danger of diſobeying, with the Advantages and Rewards he ſhould receive upon his Compliance. And upon theſe Terms charged him, in the King's Name, to worſhip as he was commanded, which he not only refuſed to do, but told them poſitively, *That if every Soul within their Maſter's Dominions ſhould yield to him in that Particular, he would never ſubmit himſelf, or adviſe any of his Sons to abandon the Religion of their Country.*

Matthias ſtopped here; and after a ſhort Silence, a Jew came forth from the Multitude to ſacrifice according to the Method preſcribed by the Officers; but *Matthias* and his Sons were ſo inflamed at the Indignity of this Affront, that in a Fury they not only killed the Jew, but the King's Officer *Apelles*, with all his Guard, as they were forcing the People to that abominable Worſhip.

In the Violence of this Reſentment, they overturned the Altar alſo; *Matthias* calling out with a loud Voice to the People about him, *As many of you as have a zealous Regard for the Purity of your Religion, follow me.*

The Father and the Sons then withdrew themſelves into the Wilderneſs, leaving their Goods and Effects behind them.

They were ſoon followed by a Number of Families into the Deſert, where they lived for ſome Time in Caves.

When this came to the Ears of the King's general Officers, they drew the Garriſon out of the Caſtle at *Jeruſalem*, and marched after the Jews into the Wilderneſs. Upon coming up to them, they endeavoured to bring them over, by fair Words, adviſing them to bethink themſelves, and to take more prudent Meaſures, without forcing the Soldiers upon the Neceſſity of a military Execution. But this was to no Purpoſe; ſo that when they found all Efforts ineffectual, they pitched upon the Sabbath Day for an Attack upon them, burning and deſtroying them in their Places of Retirement, without any Reſiſtance, or ſo much as ſtopping the Mouths of their Caves; for ſuch was the Reverence they had for the Obſervation of that Day, and the Laws that commanded them to keep it holy, that they choſe rather to periſh, than prophane it.

There were near a thouſand of them, Men, Women and Children, who were thus ſuffocated underground; but there were alſo great Numbers that eſcaped, and liſted themſelves under the Command of *Matthias*.

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Matthias finding the dire Effect of this Inactivity, repreſented to them the Legality of defending themſelves, when their Lives were in Danger on the Sabbath, as well as upon any other Day; otherwiſe that Scruple would be their total Deſtruction; their Enemies taking Advantage of that Superſtition, would be ſure to attack them at a Time when they were certain they ſhould meet with no Reſiſtance.

The Propriety of this Remark was ſo evident, that they were all convinced of the Lawfulneſs of uſing their Arms on that Sabbath, in Caſe of Neceſſity; and the Practice of it continued ever ſince.

The great General was by this Time Maſter of a conſiderable Force, inſomuch that he deſtroyed their Altars, and put all Apoſtates to the Sword, appointing Children to be circumciſed, which was before forbidden; and expelling the King's Officers that were appointed to hinder it; having drawn into a Body all that had diſperſed themſelves up and down into Hiding-places for Fear of the Enemy.

Matthias having now been a full Year in this Command, felt himſelf ſeized with certain Symptoms of Death; and calling his Sons about him, ſpoke to them to this Purpoſe.

My dear Sons, my Life is drawing to an End; but I am now to charge you upon my Bleſſing, before I leave you, that you ſtand firm to the Cauſe that your Father has aſſerted before you without the leaſt Deviation.

Remember what I have told you; and do as I have adviſed you. Do your utmoſt to ſupport the Rights and Laws of your Country, and to reſtore the Order of a Nation that is almoſt devoured by its own Corruptions and Idolatries; ſhun all Communication with thoſe that either for Fear, or for Intereſt, have betray'd it.

Shew yourſelves Sons worthy of ſuch a Father; and in Defiance of all Oppoſition, in Defence of your Country; eſteeming this the only Way to preſerve you in God's Favour. And that in Conſideration of ſo unſhaken a Virtue He will, in Time, reſtore you to your former Life and Manners.

Our Bodies, it is true, are mortal, but great and generous Actions will make us immortal in our Memory, and that is the Glory to which I would have you aſpire.

Be ſure, to agree among yourſelves, and in what Degree ſoever any of you hath an Advantage over the reſt, reſign to him the Buſineſs of his Province.

As for Example. It being Simon's *Faculty to make a right Judgment of Things, I ſhall adviſe you to pay the ſame Regard to his Counſels as thoſe of a Father.* Maccabæus *excells in Military Conduct and Bravery; wherefore chuſe him for your General, as the beſt qualified for the Vindication of your Friends, and for the Cruſhing of your Enemies.*

CHAP. V.

Judas *ſucceeds* Matthias *in the Command of the Jewiſh Army. Defeats the Governors of* Samaria; *Goes to* Jeruſalem. *Succeſs of* Judas Maccabeus. *Purifies the Temple, and regulates the confuſed State of his Countrymen. Performs many gallant Exploits in Conjunction with* Simon. *Tranſportation of the Jews out of* Gallilee *into* Judea. *Deſtruction of* Ephron, Joſeph *and* Azarias in Fighting contrary to Order, are defeated.

MATTHIAS concluded his Diſcourſe to his Sons with Prayers to God for a Bleſſing upon their Endeavours, towards the Redemption of their Countrymen, and the Recovery of their antient Rights and Privileges.

Soon after this he expired, and was buried at *Modim*. After his Funeral Obſequies were ſolemnized, *Judas*, oth erwiſe *Maccabeus*, had the public Adminiſtration put into his Hands, which was in the Year one hundred forty ſix, reckoning from *Seleucus* the firſt; and he was ſo well ſupported by his Brothers, that he cleared the Country of the Enemy, and purged the Land from all the abominable Pollutions that had been practiſed therein.

The News of this Turn of Affairs upon the Succeſſion of Judas, induced *Apollonius*, the Governor of *Samaria*, to advance with his Army againſt *Judas*; who, without Loſs of Time, met him half Way, fought and routed him, killed a great Number of his People upon the Spot, together with *Apollonius* himſelf, diſarming him with his own Hand, and carrying off his Sword in Triumph. Likewiſe he had alſo the Spoil of the Camp, a Booty of prodigious Value.

The Tidings of this Defeat, and of the vaſt Reinforcements that came thronging in to *Judas*, upon this Succeſs, gave *Seron*, the Governor of *Celo-Syria*, to underſtand, that it was neceſſary to be upon his Guard, ſo that he took a Reſolution immediately to come to a Battle, eſteeming himſelf bound to chaſtiſe Mutineers, and bring Rebels to Obedience.

In order to this Expedition, with what Men he had of his own, and with the additional Force of a Rabble of fugitive Jews, he took his March to *Bethoron*, a Village of *Judea*, where he pitched his Camp. Upon which *Judas* put himſelf in a Poſture to encounter him; But finding his Soldiers indiſpoſed for Action, whether it was for Fear of their mighty Army, or for Faintneſs upon over Faſting, he made them a ſhort Harangue, that animated them with freſh Courage and Reſolution, in the following Words.

Fellow Soldiers, It is not the Arm of Fleſh, but GOD, *that gives the Victory; not Multitudes of Men, but the Truſt and Confidence in the Almighty,*

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This is no more than we have found many Times experimentally true in the Hiſtory of our Anceſtors; who, with an inconſiderable Number of Men, in a Righteous Cauſe, that is, in Defence of their Religion, Laws, Liberties, Wives and Children, have put many Thouſands to flight.

Great is Truth, in ſhort, and the Fource of Innocence is Invincible.

With theſe ſpirited Words, he led his Men on to the Battle, where they behaved themſelves like Heroes; engaged *Seron*, and killed him upon the Spot, and defeated the whole Army of the *Aſſyrians*. For upon the Fall of their General, their Troops were preſently broken and ſcattered, and every Man's Buſineſs was to ſecure his own Flight.

Judas purſued them as far as the Plain; about eight hundred of them were ſlain in the Field of Battle, and the reſt made their Eſcape toward the Sea Side.

Theſe Diſaſters immediately ſucceeding each other, compelled *Antiochus* to raiſe a conſiderable Army for the next Campaign, which he effected, by Means of his own People, and the Addition of foreign Mercenaries, determined to enter *Judea*, early the following Spring.

But theſe Troubles had ſo interrupted the raiſing of his Taxes, beſides the Frankneſs and Generoſity of his own Nature, that upon the Payment of his Troops, he found Money fall ſhort, and that his Revenue would not anſwer the Charge of the War.

Upon this Conſideration, he propoſed rather to go into *Perſia* firſt, and to ſupply himſelf with what Money he could raiſe in that Province, leaving the Command of all the Country, between *Egypt* and *Euphrates*, during his Abſence, in the hands of one *Lyſius*, a perſon of approved Integrity, together with ſome Part alſo of his Troops and Elephants; giving him further in Charge, to take particular Care of his Son *Antiochus*, till he ſhould come back again.

And moreover, that upon the reducing of *Judea*, and the ſelling of all the Inhabitants for Slaves, he would utterly deſtroy the City, and extirpate the Nation.

Having given theſe Orders, he marched from *Perſia*, and paſſing the *Euphrates*, advanced forward into the higher Countries.

Lyſius took to his Aſſiſtances, in the Execution of this Commiſſion; *Ptolemy*, the Son of *Dorymenes*, *Gorgius* and *Nicanor*, three of the beſt Officers he could find among the King's Friends. He put theſe Commanders at the Head of forty thouſand Foot, and ſeven thouſand Horſe, with Orders to march forthwith into *Judea*.

They advanced as far as *Emmaus*, and there encamped upon the Plain, where there came over to them a great Number of Auxiliaries from *Syria*, and other neighbouring Countries, and an abundance of fugitive Jews; beſides ſeveral Merchants and Traders, with great Sums of Money to buy Slaves; theſe brought Fetters and

and Manacles with them of all Sorts to ſecure their Captives.

The Enemy had raiſed a formidable Army; but *Judas* bad them caſt themſelves upon the Protection of the Almighty, and fear nothing. And they humbled themſelves in Sackcloath, Faſting and Prayer, according to the Cuſtom of the Country when in iminent Danger, imploring God's Mercy, Favour and Protection.

The General's next Buſineſs was to range his Men by Regiments, Troops and Companies, into Order of Battle, according to the Jewiſh Cuſtom; and then to diſcharge the Army of all new married Men, and ſuch as had lately made Purchaſes, who probably might be diverted from their Duty, between the Care of their particular Intereſt, and the Service of the Public; and animating his People alſo at the ſame Time, by his Words, as well as his Actions, to acquit themſelves like Men of Honour and Courage.

We ſhall never (ſays he,) *my fellow Soldiers and Companions, have ſuch an Opportunity again of ſhewing our Bravery in the Defence of our Country, and the Contempt of all Danger, as we have now before us; for upon the Iſſue of Tomorrow's Combat, depend not only our Liberty, but all the Comforts and Advantages that attend it; and, over and above the Bleſſing of ſuch a Freedom in itſelf, and in its own Nature, our very Religion lies at Stake with it too, and we cannot ſecure the one, but by preſerving the other.*

Remember therefore what it is that you are to contend for, and you ſhall find it to be no leſs than the Sum and Subſtance of the greateſt Happineſs that ever you enjoyed; that is, the peaceable Poſſeſſion of your ancient Laws, Rites, and Diſcipline. Now whether you will rather chuſe to periſh with Infamy, and to involve the miſerable Remainder of all your Countrymen in the ſame Ruin, or venture one generous Effort for the Redemption of yourſelves, and your Friends is the Point before you.

Death is the ſame Thing to a Coward, that it is to a valiant Man, and as certain to the one as to the other; but there's a great Difference in Point of Honour, between a Gallant Man that falls in the Vindication of his Religion, Liberties, Laws, and Country, and a timid Wretch that abandons all for Fear of loſing a Life which he cannot ſave at laſt. Set theſe Things before your Mind, and reſt aſſured that you have nothing to truſt to but God's Providence, and your own concurring Reſolutions; and at the worſt, while we contend for Victory, we can never fail of Glory.

After this Speech of *Judas* to his Soldiers, while his Thoughts were intent upon the Succeſs of the approaching Battle, he received certain Intelligence, that *Gorgias* would be with him that Night with a thouſand Horſe, and five thouſand Foot, with ſome Renegado Jews for their Guide, to ſurprize him, and beat up his Quarters. This Diſcovery put *Judas* upon a Deſign of ſurpriſing him; taking

taking the Opportunity of his Army being ſo divided. In order to this he cauſed ſeveral Fires to be made in his Camp, and ſo marched all Night towards *Emmaus*, where the Enemy lay encamped.

Gorgias, in the mean Time, finding the Jews Camp deſerted; and preſuming that they were ran away through Fear, to hide themſelves in the Mountains, determined to find them out. But *Judas* coming by break of Day to the Enemies Camp, with only three thouſand Men, and thoſe badly armed; and finding the Enemy well armed, and their Camp in very good Order, he told his People for their Encouragement, that they ſhould not fear to attack them, even if they were all naked, ſo long as they were certain of God's Favour and Protection, which would ſupport them againſt all other Difficulties; with theſe Words, he ordered the Charge to be ſounded; and breaking in upon them at the ſame Inſtant, put them into ſuch Conſternation, that after putting thoſe to the Sword that reſiſted, the Reſt betook themſelves to Flight, he purſued them as far as *Gadara*, and thence to the Plains of *Idumea*, *Azotus*, and *Jamnia*. The Number of the Slain was about three Thouſand: But *Judas* would not ſuffer his People to plunder, becauſe the Troops of *Gorgias* were as yet entire; but upon the routing of him, he ſaid, that they might take Poſſeſſion of the Booty at Pleaſure.

While he was delivering theſe Words, *Gorgias*'s People diſcovering from an Eminence at Hand, the dead Bodies of their Friends; the Havock that had been made in their Tents, and their Camp covered with Smoke, they took it for granted that *Judas*'s Men were ſtill embodied, and in Condition to attack them; ſo that they fled, and diſperſed themſelves; every Man conſulting his own Safety. The Victory being thus gained without ſtriking a Blow, *Judas* permitted his Men at Pleaſure to take the Pillage of the Field, where they found Gold and Silver, coſtly Habits of Purple and Scarlet, and other rich Booty in Abundance; which they carried off in Triumph, ſinging as they marched, and giving Thanks to God, the Author of that Victory, which proved both an earneſt and a Foundation of their future Freedom.

Lyſias was ſo ſenſible of the Shame and of this Defeat, that to redeem his Credit, he brought into the Field, the Year following, an Army of ſixty thouſand Foot, and five thouſand Horſe; all Men of approved Valour, and with this Body he entered *Judea*, by the Way of Mountains, encamping at a Place called *Bethſura*.

Judas was not at all diſcouraged at his Superiority of Number, but marched directly towards him with an Army of ten thouſand Men only. His Truſt was in God alone; ſo after a ſhort, and fervent Prayer for a Bleſſing upon his Arms, he charged the Enemy with ſuch Intrepidity, that upon the firſt Shock he forced the Line, and cut them off five thouſand Men upon the Spot.

This unexpected Diſaſter put their whole Army into ſuch Confuſion,

that *Lyſias* finding them obſtinately determined either to live or die in the Poſſeſſion of their Liberty, thought proper to withdraw his Troops before the Conſternation became too general; ſo that he returned to *Antioch*, where he poſted himſelf by the Help of Mercenaries, and other additional Reinforcements, in the moſt convenient Situation for another Attack.

Judas was ſo fluſhed with theſe repeated Succeſſes againſt the Forces of *Antioch*, that he prevailed upon the Jews, in Confidence that after ſo many Victories obtained, God would not forſake them, to march without any more Delay to *Jeruſalem* itſelf, and there to purge the Temple, and offer up their daily Sacrifices. But when they came thither, and found the Temple abandoned, the Gates all burnt, and the Courts overrun with Weeds, *Judas*, and his People could not refrain from Tears.

The two great Works that he firſt entered upon, were the Aſſault of the Citadel, and the cleanſing of the Temple. The former he committed to his Officers and Soldiers, and reſerved the Care of the other to himſelf. As ſoon as he had gone through with the purging of it in Form, he provided new Veſſels and Utenſils; a Candleſtick, a Table, and an Altar of Incenſe, all of pure Gold; put up new Veils and Hangings upon the Walls, and before the Paſſages of the Doors; and in the next Place ſupplied the Doors themſelves. The Altar that had been prophaned with idolatrous Sacrifices, and burnt Offerings, was demoliſhed, and removed; and another of unhewn Stone erected in it's Place.

Upon the twenty-fifth Day of the Month *Caſleu*, which the *Macedonians* call *Apellæus*, they ſet lighted Tapers in the Candleſticks; offered Incenſe upon the Altar, and laid the Shew-Bread upon the Table, and proceeded their Oblations of burnt Offerings. This fell out preciſely upon the ſame Day, three Years, from the Prophanation of the Temple and Religion by *Antiochus*; the Temple having now been full three Years deſerted.

This happened in the Year one hundred forty-five; the twenty-fourth Day of the Month *Apellæus*, and the hundred and fifty-third Olympiad; which Solemnity of Purification was repeated alſo on the anniverſary Day of the Year one hundred forty-eight; Olympiad one hundred forty and four, as the prophet *Daniel* had expreſsly foretold, four hundred and eight Years before the Diſſolution by the *Macedonians* came to paſs.

The Celebration of his Feſtivity was continued by *Judas* for eight Days, with ſolemn Sacrifices and rejoicing; as well as all the innocent Tokens of Mirth and Feſtivity, ſuch as Acclamation, Praiſe, and Thankſgiving. The People were ſo tranſported at the unexpected Bleſſing of finding themſelves reſtored to the Religion and Laws of their Forefathers, that they appointed an Anniverſary of eight Days Solemnity to be ſtrictly obſerved by their Poſterity for ever. *Judas* in the mean Time rebuilt the Walls

Walls of the City, and fortified them with ſtrong Towers to keep off an Enemy; ſettling a Garriſon in *Bethſura*, and putting the Place into a Poſture of Defence.

The neighbouring Nations were ſo irritated, at the growing Power of the Jews, that they ſet their Inſtruments at work by Fraud and Treachery to circumvent them, deſtroying them by Stratagem: *Judas*, in the mean Time, uſing the beſt Means he could, either to prevent, or to diſappoint their Incurſions. He fell at this Time upon *Acrabatan*, where he killed great Numbers of the *Edomites*, the Poſterity of *Eſau*, making himſelf Maſter alſo of a great Booty.

He blocked up the Sons of *Bann* likewiſe in the ſtrong Places they were poſſeſſed of, and where they laid in wait to make Sallies upon the Jews, taking the Places by Aſſault; killing the Defendants, and laying the Forts in Aſhes.

After the ſubduing of theſe People, he carried his Arms againſt the *Ammonites*, who had at that Time a numerous Army under the Command of *Timotheus*. He fought with theſe, and overcame them, and took the City of *Jazar*; carried away the People's Wives and Children, Captives; and after the pillaging of the City, ſet it on Fire, and ſo returned home victorious.

He was no ſooner gone, but the People of the adjacent Countries taking Advantage of his Departure, and gathering together at *Galaad*, made an Attempt upon the Jews that lay in that Quarter. Theſe being forced to take Sanctuary in the Fortreſs of *Dathema*, gave Intimation to *Judas*, that *Timotheus* had a Deſign to attack them, and earneſtly deſired he would ſend them Relief.

In the very Inſtant that *Judas* was reading this Account, ſeveral Meſſengers arrived from *Galilee*, with Remonſtrances and Complaints, that the People of *Ptolemais*, *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and other bordering Nations, were all joined in a Confederacy againſt them.

Judas determined on the Relief of his Friends and Countrymen in both Places, ſent his Brother *Simon* with three thouſand choice Men to the Succour of the Jews at *Galilee*; and with eight thouſand more, marched with his other Brother *Jonathan*, to *Galaad*, leaving the reſt of the Army under the Command of *Joſeph*, the Son of *Zacharias* and *Azarias*, as his Lieutenant General, for the Guard of *Jeruſalem*, with Orders to avoid coming to Action till his Return.

Simon, upon his arrival at *Galilee*, engaged the Enemy, and defeated them, purſuing them to the very Gates of *Ptolemais*, and killing about three thouſand in the Flight. They ſtripped them of what they had, and redeemed the Priſoners with the Goods they had taken from them, and then conducted them back to *Jeruſalem*.

At the ſame Time *Judas* and his Brother *Jonathan*, after three Day's March beyond *Jordan* in the Wilderneſs, were hoſpitably entertained by the *Nabathites*, who very kindly gave

gave them Intelligence of the extreme Diſtreſs and Danger of divers of their Friends and Countrymen, who were cloſe ſhut up in the Towns and Caſtles of *Galaad*; adviſing them with all imaginable Expedition, to haſten by the Way of the Deſart to their Relief.

In this Expedition, they took the Town of *Baraſa* by the Way, putting all the People to the Sword that were able to bear Arms, and burning the City to the Ground.

Though it was now almoſt Night, *Judas* proſecuted his Way to a Caſtle wherein he underſtood the Jews were beſieged; and came there betimes in the Morning, found the Enemy plying their Machines and Scaling Ladders, to force the Place; whereupon he arraigned his Troops in three Diviſions; animated his Men to behave themſelves reſolutely for the Relief of their Countrymen and Friends, and, upon the Sound of the Trumpet, charged the Enemy in the Rear.

As ſoon as *Timotheus* underſtood that *Judas Maccabeus* had the Command of this Action, a Perſon whoſe Valour and Conduct he knew by woful Experience, his Men were ſo diſmayed at the very Name, that they immediately fled. Eight thouſand of them fell upon the Spot, and the Jews cloſely purſued them.

In the Purſuit, *Judas* took a Town of the Barbarians, called *Mallum*, where, having put all the Males to Death, they deſtroyed the City by Fire.

They did the ſame thing alſo at *Caſphan* and *Boſor*, and other Places, that they took in that Country.

Soon after this, *Timotheus* raiſed a very conſiderable Army, and, among other Auxiliaries, he had a Band of Arabians. They croſſed the River, and encamped near *Raphen*, where he encouraged his People to acquit themſelves like Men, and be ſure to keep the Jews from paſſing the River, obſerving to them, that the whole Cauſe depended upon it; and that if ever they gained that Paſs, they would moſt certainly carry the Day.

When *Judas* underſtood that *Timotheus* was reſolved upon, and prepared for a Battle, he paſſed the River immediately with his Army, gave the onſet, and put the Army to the Rout upon the firſt encounter; killed thoſe that reſiſted, and putting the reſt to flight. Theſe, caſting away their Arms, diſperſed; Part of them betook themſelves for Sanctuary to the Temple of *Carnaim*, in hope that the Place might protect them. But *Judas* took the Town by Force, burnt the Temple, and deſtroyed all the Inhabitants by Fire and Sword.

This Difficulty being ſurmounted, he gathered together all the *Iſraelites* that were in the Countries of *Galaad*, with their Wives, Children, and Goods, and carried them all into *Judea*.

The City of *Ephron* laying ſo directly in his Way, he ſent a Meſſage to the Inhabitants for Leave to paſs with his Army through the Town; but the Ports being barricadoed, and the

the Avenues cut off, the Inhabitants in plain Terms denied him a Paſſage.

Upon this Repulſe, he encouraged his Men to attack the Town; they ſurrounded it immediately, and in one Day and Night, made himſelf Maſter of it, laid it in Aſhes, and marched with his Army over the Bodies of the Dead, through the Ruins, putting all the Males that were found in it to the Sword.

After paſſing the River *Jordan*, they advanced to a great Plain near *Bethſan*, called by the Greeks *Scythepolis*, and from thence returned to *Judea*, the People rejoicing as they paſſed along, with Hymns and triumphal Songs, and offering Sacrifices of Thankſgiving for the Safety of the Army; for they had not yet loſt ſo much as one Jew in all theſe Engagements.

Joſeph, the Son of *Zacharias* together with *Azarias*, two great Captains, being left for a Guard to *Judea*, in the Abſence of *Simon*, who had marched into *Galilee* againſt the People of *Ptolemais*, and *Judas*, with his Brother *Jonathan* againſt the *Galaadites*, thought it incumbent on them to ſignalize themſelves by ſome glorious Enterprize as well as their Brethren.

With this Spirit of Emulation they advanced to *Jamnia*, where *Gorpias*, the Governor of the Place, gave them a Battle before the Town, killed about two thouſand of them, and purſued the reſt to the very Borders of *Judea*.

This Calamity deſervedly befel them, for not obeying the Order of their General, who had poſitively commanded them not to engage the Enemy upon any Terms, till his Return. Such a Caution redounded much to the Reputation of *Judas*, who was well aſſured, that if they departed from their Inſtructions, they would ſuffer for it.

But *Judas* and his Brethren carried on the War, in the mean Time, with the utmoſt Vigour, againſt the *Edomites*, ſubduing them on all Hands.

They took *Hebron* by Force, demoliſhed the Fortifications, and burnt the Towers and Caſtles to the Ground, laid their Enemy's Country waſte, demoliſhed *Mariſſa*, and from thence over-ran and pillaged *Azotus*.

Having performed theſe Exploits, and enriched themſelves with a conſiderable Booty, they returned in triumph to *Jeruſalem*.

CHAP. VI.

The Ambition and Avarice of Antiochus *retaliated in his own Diſgrace. He dies: And appointes* Philip *to the Regency, during the Minority of his Son. The young Prince is declared King. The* Jews *are harraſſed by the* Macedonians. Eleazar *is ſlain. Death of* Onias. Antiochus *and* Lyſias *put to Death. Ravages and Depredations of* Alcimus.

AS *Antiochus Epiphanes* was about this Progreſs through ſome of his Highland Provinces, he was told of a certain rich City in

Perſia, called *Elymais*, and of a moſt magnificent Temple in it, dedicated to *Diana*, in which were depoſited precious Gifts of all Sorts, with the very Shields and Breaſt-plates of *Alexander*, the Son of *Philip* of *Macedon*.

Antiochus was ſo attracted by theſe ſplendid Curioſities, that he advanced toward it with his Army to take it by Aſſault; but the Inhabitants, without any Regard either to his Power, or his Deſign, made a brave Reſiſtance, and diſappointed his Expectation; nor did they content themſelves with beating him from the Walls, but followed him ſo cloſe upon his Retreat, that they cut off great Part of his Rear, and drove him before them like a Fugitive for Protection into *Babylon*.

While he lay under this Diſgrace, News came of the Defeat of his other Troops, to whom he had committed the Care and Conduct of the War againſt the Jews, and of the Daily Increaſe of their Number and Power; ſo that greatly oppreſſed with Grief and Concern for his various Loſſes and Diſappointments, he fell ſick, and finding his Diſſolution approach, he called his Friends about him, and told them both the Cauſe and Nature of his Diſtemper.

I am, ſaid he, *juſtly puniſhed for the Sake of theſe miſerable Jews, for the ſacrilegious Rifling and prophaning of their Temple, and for the Contempt of the heavenly God.*

When he had thus ſaid, he expired.

When *Antiochus* found himſelf near his End, he ſent for *Philip*, as the moſt truſty of his Friends, and committed the Regency of his Kingdom into his Hands, delivering up to him at the ſame Time the Crown, the Royal Robes, and Signet, with Orders to preſerve them for his Son *Antiochus*, who was then in his Minority, ſtrictly enjoining him to take Care of his Education, and to ſecure the Crown to him, when he ſhould be capable of the Adminiſtration.

The Death of this Prince was no ſooner made known to the People, than *Lyſias* declared *Antiochus* King, under the Name of *Eupator*, having at that Time the Tuition of the young Prince.

The *Macedonians*, in the mean Time, who were then garriſoned in the Citadel of *Jeruſalem*, together with ſome Jewiſh Revolters, made ſeveral Sallies upon the Jews, as they went to Worſhip in the Temple; ſo *Judas* found it abſolutely neceſſary to reduce that Fort for the common Security of the Nation.

It was now juſt a hundred and fifty Years that this Government had been in the Family of *Seleucus*. *Judas* was ſo determined upon the Accompliſhment of his Deſign, that he ſet to framing of Machines and Engines for Battery, and the caſting up of Works.

While this was in Agitation, ſeveral Deſerters eſcaped by Night, and joining with others, went to *Antiochus*, ſetting forth the miſerable Condition to which they were reduced by their own Tribe, for their Obedience

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ELEAZARS *bold* ENTERPRISE, 1 Macc.s VI. 46.

dience to the King's Command, in Oppoſition to their own Law, and that they were then in imminent Danger of falling in the Hands of *Judas*, without immediate Relief.

The young Prince gave Orders to his Friends and Commanders to levy what Auxiliaries were to be had for Money, over and above the greateſt Number of choice Men that they could raiſe from among his own Subjects.

His Orders were executed with ſuch Diligence, that in a ſhort Time they muſtered a hundred thouſand Foot, twenty thouſand Horſe, and two and thirty Elephants. With this formidable Army, under the Command of *Lyſias*, the King marched out of *Antioch*, advanced to *Idumea*, and from thence proceeded to *Bethſura*, a Place well fortified, and ſpent much Time before it; for between Sallies and Stratagems, the beſieged found Means to defeat all the Attempts of the Enemy.

Judas being informed of the Approach of *Antiochus*, raiſed the Siege, and marched to meet the Enemy, pitching his Tent upon the very Entrance into the Streights of *Bethzacharias*, about ſeventy Furlongs from the Adverſary.

Antiochus upon this quitted the *Bethſurites*, and encamped within Diſtance of engaging *Judas*, appointing his Army, by break of Day, to put themſelves upon their March in Order of Battle. But the Place being too narrow for the Elephants to march in Front, they were forced into a Defile, with a thouſand Foot, and five hundred Horſe, upon the Guard of every Elephant, and ſo to advance one after another with a kind of Tower or Caſtle upon their Backs, charged with Archers, while the reſt of the Troops mounted the Hills on both Sides, under the Command of able and truſty Officers.

From this Aſcent they gave the Attack, with ſo horrid a Shout that Vallies reſounded with the Echo; ſo that the hideous Outcry, and the Flaſhes of their gold and brazen Bucklers, exhibited a Scene of Aſtoniſhment and Surpriſe.

But all this was to *Judas* no more than empty Pomp and Noiſe; for he received them ſo bravely, that he killed near ſix hundred upon the firſt Encounter.

While they were thus engaged, *Eleazer*, otherwiſe called *Savaran*, the Brother of *Judas*, taking Notice of one Elephant that was capariſoned with richer Trappings than the reſt, he made his Way with a generous Reſolution through all the Guards to that Beaſt, taking for granted, that the King was upon her.

When he had cut part of his Oppoſers to Pieces on each hand, and forced the reſt to clear his Paſſage, he crept under the Belly of the Elephant, and wounded him to Death; himſelf alſo periſhed under the Weight of the Beaſt upon his Fall. He had the Honour however to die in the Attempt of a glorious Action, and encompaſſed with the dead Bodies of his Enemies.

Judas finding himſelf ſo mightily exceeded in Numbers, drew off to the

the Siege of the Fortreſs at *Jeruſalem* again, when *Antiochus* ſent one Part of his Army to ſit down before *Bethſura*, and with the Remainder of it went to *Jeruſalem*.

The *Bethſurites* were ſo diſcouraged by the Appearance of the King's Troops, and ſo much more diſheartened by their Want of Proviſions, that they found themſelves under a Neceſſity of delivering up the Place, which they did, upon Conditions, with ſolemn Articles, that there ſhould be no Violence or Moleſtation offered them whatever.

But the King kept his Faith no farther than to be the bare ſaving of their Lives; for the Inhabitants were all turned naked out of the Town, and a Garriſon of his own fixed in their Place. But the Siege of the Temple coſt them much Pains, thro' the reſolute Defence that was made, all their Machenes and Approaches were eluded by Counter-workings and Deſigns.

Their only Diſtreſs was Want of Bread; for having already ſpent their laſt Year's Store, and this happening to fall out upon the ſeventh Year, when by the Jewiſh Law they could neither plow nor ſow, great Numbers of the Jews deſerted the Town mearly for want of Proviſion, inſomuch that there was ſcarcely Members ſufficient to defend the Place.

The King and his General *Lyſius* received Intelligence, that *Philip* had uſurped the Government, and was marching toward them at the Head of an Army out of *Perſia*; ſo that they came to a ſecret Reſolution to quit the Siege, ſeek him out, and give him Battle; but to execute their Deſign with ſuch Privacy, that neither Officer nor Soldier ſhould ſo much as divine the Intent. Wherefore the King ordered *Lyſias*, without mentioning the Name of *Philip*, to enter into a Diſcourſe with the Commanders and Soldiers concerning the Siege, the Strength of the Place, the Difficulty of the Enterprize, and to obſerve to them upon the Whole, that being reduced to a Want of Corn, and the King's Buſineſs alſo requiring his Preſence elſewhere, they could not do better than to come to ſome Sort of Agreement with them, upon Condition of allowing them the free Exerciſe of their particular Religion, Laws, and Cuſtoms; and this point being given up, which had been the only Ground of their Rebellions, the King might return when he pleaſed, without any farther Trouble.

This *Lyſias* had in Charge to communicate to the Army, and the Soldiers were highly pleaſed with the Propoſal.

Matters being thus concerted, *Antiochus* diſpatched a Herald to *Judas*, and the Beſieged, with an Offer of Peace, and a free Enjoyment and Exerciſe of their Laws and Cuſtoms, which they very readily agreed to, and the Security of an Oath for the Performance of Articles, delivered up the Temple; but upon *Antiochus*'s taking poſſeſſion of it, he found the Place ſo very ſtrong, that without Regard to his Oath and Promiſe, he ordered his Soldiers to demoliſh the Walls, and lay them level with the Ground

Ground, which was executed accordingly, and ſo returned to *Antioch*, carrying the High Prieſt, *Onias*, alias *Menelaus*, along with him.

This was done upon the Advice of *Lyſias*, who told him, That if ever he would render the Jews quiet, or himſelf at Eaſe, that Man muſt be taken off; for it was at his Inſtigation that his Father forced the Jews to a Religion againſt their Laws and Conſciences; and that *Onias* was conſequently the Author and Promoter of all the Evils that had befallen him.

The King upon this ſent away *Menelaus* to *Berrhea* in *Syria*, where he cauſed him to be put to Death, after ten Years Enjoyment of the Pontificate. He was a very wicked Man, who, to ſecure the Dignity to himſelf, cauſed a general Defection among the Jews, from the Laws and Worſhip of their Country. His next Succeſſor was *Alcimus*, who was alſo called *Jacimus*.

When *Antiochus* found that *Philip* had now uſurped the Government, he fought with him, and overcame him; took him Priſoner, and ordered him to be put to Death. But the Son of the High Prieſt *Onias* being left an Infant, by the Death of *Menelaus*, finding that the King had conferred the Dignity on *Alcimus*, who ſtood in no Relation to the ſacerdotal Family, and was only overruled by *Lyſias* in the transfering of it, fled into *Egypt*, where he was ſo graciouſly received, both by *Ptolomy*, and his Queen *Cleopatra*; that at his Requeſt, they beſtowed a Place of Truſt upon him in *Heliopolis*, where he erected a Temple after the Modal of that at *Jeruſalem*.

Demetrius the Son of *Seleucus* having fled away from *Rome*, took Poſſeſſion of *Tripolis* in *Syria*; and with as many Mercenaries as he could get together, invaded the Country, where the People did not only come over to him in great Numbers, with open Arms to receive him; but as a farther Inſtance of an Affection to his Intereſt, ſeized upon the Perſons of *Antiochus* and *Lyſias*, and brought them in Cuſtody to him.

Upon this they were immediately both put to Death by the Command of *Demetrius*; *Antiochus* having now reigned two Years. He had in his Party a great Number of profligate Jews, that had been baniſhed for notorious Crimes, together with *Alcimus* the high Prieſt, who all joined in one common Accuſation and Complaint againſt the whole People of the Jews, but eſpecially *Judas Maccabeus* and his Brethren, whom they were charged, not only with the Deſtruction of as many of the King's Friends as fell into their Hands, but with the very Ejection of themſelves out of the Land too. Wherefore they made it their Requeſt to *Demetrius*, only to ſend ſome particular Perſon that he could confide in to examine Matters in *Judea*, and to ſee what Havock *Judas* has made there.

Demetrius in a Rage diſpatched upon this Errand *Baſchides*, formerly a Friend to *Antiochus Epiphanes*; he was a reſolute Man, and being at that

Time Governor of *Meſopotamia*, diſpatched *Alcimus* with a Commiſſion to fall upon *Judas* and his Followers. With theſe Troops *Bacchides* left *Antioch*, and marched directly into *Judea*, where he gave *Judas* and his Brethren a ſolemn Invitation to come to a better Underſtanding with him.

Now the only Deſign was under the Colour of a peaceable and friendly Diſpoſition, to draw them in and ſurprize them. But as he came at the Head of an Army, and in the Poſture of an Enemy rather than a Friend, *Judas* kept himſelf upon his Guard, without giving any Credit to his Pretenſions; though ſome credulous People went over to them, in Confidence that their Countrymen and their Tribeſman *Alcimus* would do them no Injury; eſpecially as they had taken a ſolemn Oath, that no Violence ſhould be offered, either to themſelves, or any of their Party. This Confidence, however, deceived them; for *Bacchides*, without any Regard to Conſcience, cauſed ſixty of them to be cut to Pieces on the Place: Which barbarous Perfidy ſerved for a Warning to the reſt not to approach him.

Bacchides, after this, removed his Army from *Jeruſalem*, and went to *Bethzeth*, where he found ſeveral Deſerters, and other diſaffected People, which he put to the Sword. This being done, he commanded all the Jews in his Abſence to obey *Alcimus*; and leaving Part of his Army with him for the Security of the Province, returned with the Reſt to King *Demetrius* at *Antioch*.

Alcimus during all theſe Tranſactions had an Eye to the Pontificate, and reflecting, that it was an Honour hardly to be compaſſed but by the Favour and Good-Will of the People, betook himſelf to the popular Arts of Courteſey and Affability, to ingratiate himſelf with the Multitude: So that by Means of obliging Speech and Behaviour, he quickly doubled the Number of the Forces that were left him; but it was with a Band of impious Fugitives who inliſted themſelves in his Service: with theſe he ravaged the Country, putting all the Jews to Death wherever he came, that were Friends to *Maccabeus*.

Judas incenſed at the Depredations committed by a rabble Army, headed by *Alcimus*, determined to retaliate in themſelves the Injuries they had offered, but ſenſible that he was not able to cope with them by himſelf, he applied to *Demetrius* at *Antioch*, for Succour, where he did all that was poſſible, to irritate that Prince againſt *Judas*, by reſenting the Indignities he had put upon him already, and the Certainty of future Inſults, unleſs he ſent a powerful Army to call that bold and wicked Man to an Account for his Miſdemeanours.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Treachery and Blaſphemy of Nicanor *puniſhed. The Wickedneſs of* Alcimus *retaliated by a judicial Vengeance.* Judas *ſucceeds to the Pontificate. Enters into an Alliance with the* Romans. *Nobly eſpouſes the Cauſe of his Countrymen, and is ſlain in Battle.*

JUDAS was now become ſo formidable, that *Demetrius* was very fearful of the Conſequence if he ſuffered him thus to increaſe in Strength and Credit; ſo that he called *Nicanor* to him, who had been formerly his Companion in his Departure from *Rome*, and his particular Confident and Friend; aſſigned him the Command of ſuch an Army as he reckoned ſufficient for the reducing of *Judas*, with poſitive Orders to make War upon the whole Nation, and give no Quarter.

Upon his ſetting out for *Jeruſalem*, he propounded to himſelf to diſſemble his Intenſions, and try if he could inveigle *Judas* under a Countenance of peaceable Purpoſes, into a Credulity that would certainly be his Ruin. *Nicanor* thus ſuggeſted the Matter to him by Way of Expoſtulation. *Why ſhould we expoſe the Sum of all our Happineſs to the uncertain Chance of War, and not rather adjuſt the Point in controverſy by an amicable Treaty? If you apprehend any Danger in it, I am ready to give you the moſt ſacred Oath for Security, that one man can give to another; for Peace, is all my Buſineſs: As you may judge by the Friends I have brought along with me, is to acquaint you with my Maſter's Will and Pleaſure, and of his ſincere Good-Will to the whole Nation of the Jews.*

This Declaration wrought ſo far upon the Brothers, that without any Suſpicion of Treaſon, they interchangeably paſſed their Oaths, and with great Frankneſs received *Nicanor* with his whole Army. After the firſt greeting between *Judas* and *Nicanor*, the latter gave a Signal to his People to ſieze him, but the Plot being diſcovered in Time, he made his Eſcape to his own People: And after the detecting of this Treachery, both Parties prepared to decide the Quarrel by open Force, without any farther Mention of a Treaty. The Armies drew out, and came to a Battle near *Capharſalama*, where *Judas* was worſted, and forced into the Caſtle of *Jeruſalem*.

It happened one Day, as *Nicanor* was paſſing by the Temple, that ſeveral of the Prieſts and Elders met him, and ſhewed him the Sacrifices that they were about to offer to God, for the Proſperity and Welfare of *Demetrius*.

Nicanor threatened them, and even uttered blaſphemous Revilings againſt God himſelf; declaring that if the People did not deliver up *Judas* to him, he would return to their Sorrow and Coſt; deſtroy the Temple, and leave it in Aſhes.

With theſe Menaces he departed; but the Prieſts were ſo dejected at this Declaration, that they forthwith addreſſed themſelves to God with Prayers and Tears, to protect his own Houſ-

Houſe, and his Miniſters that belonged to it, againſt the Outrages of the Enemy.

Nicanor departed from *Jeruſalem*, and pitched his Tent in *Bethoron*, where he was joined by a great Reinforcement out of *Syria*. *Judas* at the ſame Time encamped at *Adaſi*, within thirty Furlongs of the Enemy, and with a Body only of a thouſand Men. He told them, that the Enemy indeed was numerous, but that the Cauſe was God's, whoſe Power was above that of a Multitude; exhorting them not to trouble themſelves concerning the apparent Superiority of the Army they were to encounter, but to fall on like Men of Courage and Reſolution, and commit the Iſſue to God.

In fine, it came to a Battle; and the firſt Encounter was very vigorous; but upon the Fall of great Numbers of the Enemy, and of *Nicanor* too, who did all that could be done by a great Commander, and a brave Man, the whole Army ſcattered; and upon the Loſs of their General, caſt away their Arms, in order to make them lighter for their Flight. *Judas* in the mean Time purſuing the Fugitives without Mercy, made Proclamation, by Sound of Trumpet, thro' all the Towns and Cities where he paſſed, of the Victory he had obtained.

Upon this Signal, the Country People gathered together, and fell ſo unmercifully upon the Soldiers in their Flight, that of nine thouſand Men, which was the preciſe Number of their Army, there was not a Man that eſcaped.

The Jews, after this Victory, had an Interval of Peace, but it laſted not long.

Alcimus was extremely Deſirous of having the old Wall of the Sanctuary pulled down, and the Works of the antient Prophets demoliſhed; but in the very Inſtant of his ordering it to be done, God ſtruck him with ſo potent a Diſeaſe, that he fell upon the Ground ſpeechleſs, where he languiſhed in great Torment, and then died, after being four Years in the Office of the Pontificate. The People upon his deceaſe unanimouſly chuſing *Judas* as his Succeſſor.

The new High Prieſt had heard ſo much of the Fame and Power of the Romans, and of the Overthrows they had gived the Gauls, Spaniards, Carthaginians, nay, to Greece itſelf, and King *Perſeus*, *Philip* and *Antiochus*, that he had a mighty Deſire to enter into a League with them; accordingly he ſent *Eupolemus*, the Son of *John*, and *Jaſon* the Son of *Eleazar*, two particular Friends, to Rome upon an Embaſſy, ſoliciting to be received into the Number of their Allies, and that they would write to *Demetrius*, to forbear making War with the Jews, on any Pretence, for the future.

The Senate was ſo well pleaſed with the Propoſal, that they conſented to the League, and paſſed an Order ſoon after in Favour of it, which was written in Tables of Braſs; the Copy of it ſent to *Jeruſalem*, and the original

original depoſited in the Capital. The Articles were to this Effect.

That no People whatſoever, under the Juriſdiction of the Romans, ſhould preſume to make War upon the Jews, or to aſſiſt any of their Enemies with Corn, Shipping, Money, or the like. and the ſame Obligation to lie reciprocally upon the Jews, in caſe of any War made upon the Romans.

If there ſhould be any thing after this, which the Jews would have to be added, or taken away, that it be firſt ratified by the common Conſent of the People.

This Reſolution of the Senate was written by *Eupolemus*, *Jaſon*, *Judas*, the High Prieſt, and his Brother *Simon*, general of the Army. This was the firſt Alliance that ever was made between the Jews and the Romans.

Upon the Report of *Nicanor*'s Death, and the Defeat of the Army, *Demetrius* ſent *Bacchides* a ſecond Time into *Judea*, who advanced with freſh Troops to *Arbela*, a Town in *Galilee*, and there encamped, forcing a great many Jews out of the Caves there, where they hid themſelves.

From thence he haſtened away to *Jeruſalem*; and upon Intelligence that *Judas* and his People were at *Berezeth*, poſted immediately with twenty Thouſand Foot, and two thouſand Horſe, to encounter him, who had, at that Time but a bare thouſand Men about him, and but eight hundred of thoſe ſtood by him; for two hundred of them deſerted him through Fear of being over powered.

In this Want of Men, and Time for recruiting, *Judas* maintained his Reſolution, in deſpite of all Difficulties, of putting it to the Fate of a Battle, only deſiring his Men to ſtand by him, and follow his Example.

They repreſented to him, how vain and raſh a Thing it would be to contend with ſuch inſupportable Odds, adviſing him rather to attempt an honourable Retreat, by which Means poſſibly he might reinforce himſelf.

But he declared, *That it ſhould never be ſaid, that the Sun ever ſaw* Judas *turn his Back upon an Enemy. If it ſhould be our Lot now to die, God's Will be done, provided that we do not blaſt the Reputation of a glorious Life with an ignominious Death.*

With theſe Words he rouſed the Courage of his Soldiers to his own Pitch, and animated them for the Combat.

Bacchides having ranged his Army, placing the Horſe upon the two Wings, whereof he himſelf commanded the right, his light armed Men and Archers in the Front, ſupported by a Macedonian * Phalanx in the Body. In this Order of Battle, he advanced up to the Enemy, ſounded a Charge, and with a military

* The *Macedonian* Phalanx, was much the ſame as the *Roman* Legion; it was a four ſquare Body, conſiſting of eight thouſand Footmen ſet in cloſe Array.

Shout, according to Cuſtom, gave the Onſet. *Judas* encountering him on the other Hand after the ſame Manner.

The Engagement was maintained with great Vigour on both Sides, from Morning till towards Sun-ſet; when *Judas* taking Notice of the Danger his Men were in of being over-powered by the Enemy's right Wing, where *Bacchides*, with the Flower of the Army fiercing aſſailed them, came in with a Band of valiant and courageous Youths to their Relief; and breaking their Line, pierced into the very Body of them, routed, and gave them Chace as far as Mount *Azotus*.

The Enemy's left Wing upon this followed *Judas* ſo cloſely, that he was now beſet on all Hands, and out of all Poſſibility of eſcaping; yet he and his People ſtood their Ground, and bravely reſolved to ſell their Lives as dear as poſſible; after a great Slaughter of their Enemies, *Judas* and his Companions were ſo wearied out, that they ſeemed at laſt to be rather ſpent than overcome. Nor did they fall unrevenged.

Thus did this glorious Hero finiſh the Character of a great Man, by making his Life and Death correſpond in Point of true Valour.

It could not be expected that the Soldiers, after the Loſs of ſo brave a General, could diſpute the Point any further without a Leader. So they preſently diſperſed, while the two Brothers, *Simon* and *Jonathan*, treated with the Enemy for the Body of their Brother, which they carried away, and laid it at *Modin* in the Sepulchre of his Fathers, with all funeral Magnificence, and with the Solemnity of a public Mourning for ſeveral Days, in Honour of his Memory, according to the Cuſtom of the Place upon ſo extraordinary an Occaſion.

This was the end of *Judas Maccabeus*, a generous, and a valiant Man, the true Son of the Virtue, as well as the Blood of *Matthias*; for he never forgot the Precepts of his dying Father; who enjoined him upon his Bleſſing, never to decline any Labour or Hazard for the Liberty and Welfare of his Countrymen.

In Purſuance of this Charge, he acquired everlaſting Honour, by the Reſcue of his Friends out of the Hands of the *Macedonians*, and by his three Years Adminiſtration in the Office of High Prieſt.

BOOK

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK IX.

CHAP. I.

Judas *is ſucceeded by* Jonathan, *who maintains the Oppoſition againſt* Bacchides, *with various Succeſs, till they enter into an Alliance.* Jonathan *forms a Treaty with* Demetrius. *Fortifies* Jeruſalem. *Is ſhewn great Favours by* Alexander Balaz, *who oppoſes* Demetrius. *Death of that Prince.*

IT has been already obſerved, that *Judas*, the mighty Captain and valiant Defender of the Jews, after ſeveral bloody Battles fought in that righteous Cauſe, loſt his Life in a magnanimous Conteſt for their Religion and Laws.

This illuſtrious Perſon was no ſooner taken off, but the whole Party of the profligate Jews, that, contrary to Conſcience, Faith and Honour, had abandoned the Religion, Laws and Cuſtoms of the Nation, reſumed their former Animoſities, and perſecuted their honeſt Countrymen, more Spitefully than ever.

There happened alſo at the ſame Time a general Famine, which doubled the other Calamity; for between Want of Bread on the one Hand, and Want of Power to defend themſelves againſt their Enemies on the other, the Miſery lay ſo heavy upon them, that a great many of the Jews found themſelves under ſome Neceſſity to comply with the Faction of the *Macedonians*.

Upon this Juncture, *Bacchides* convened all the apoſtate Jews that were gone over to ſtrange Gods, and committed the Care of the Government principally into their Hands, who made it their Buſineſs, in the firſt Place, to ſeize all the Friends and late Partizans of *Judas*, and thereby deliver them to *Bacchides*, to torture them at Pleaſure, and in the End put every Man to Death.

The Condition of the Jews was never

never more deplorable ſince their Captivity in *Babylon*, as it was at this Time; inſomuch, that all thoſe who had wiſhed well to *Judas*, joined in a Requeſt to *Jonathan*, not only to follow his Brother's Example, who had ſo frankly ſacrificed his Blood for the Liberties of his Country, but to take upon himſelf his Command alſo, the whole Nation lying under ſuch deſperate Circumſtances, that they muſt be all inevitably loſt without a Leader.

His Anſwer was, That he was ready to do or ſuffer any thing for the public Good; whereupon, with the unanimous Conſent of the People, he was declared their General.

When *Bacchides* came to be informed of this Choice, and to reflect, that *Jonathan* was as likely to give as much Trouble and Diſturbance to the King and Macedonians, as his Brother *Judas*, he determined to take him off by Treachery. But he and his Brother *Simon* were both ſo well aware of ſuch a Deſign, that they provided for themſelves betimes, by withdrawing into the neighbouring Deſart, with what Strength they were able to get together, and pitched their Tents by the Pool of *Aſphar*.

Bacchides looking upon this Retreat into the Wilderneſs, as the Effect of Fear, and no other than a direct Flight from the Face of an Enemy, marched toward them with all his Troops, and encamped beyond *Jordan*, and made Choice of that Place for his Rendezvous.

When *Jonathan* came to hear of this Motion, he ſent his Brother to the Arabian Nabathites, being in Friendſhip with them, for Leave to depoſit their Baggage in their Cuſtody, till the Battle with *Bacchides* ſhould be decided.

But as he was upon the Way, the Sons of *Amaraus* made a Sally out of *Medaba* upon the Convoy; took all their Carriages, and whatever elſe they had about them; killed *John* upon the Spot, and all his Company.

Bacchides having Intelligence that *Jonathan* lay encamped in the Fenny Grounds near the River *Jordan*, pitched upon the Sabbath-Day for the Attack, in Confidence of the ſuperſtitous Reverence they had for that Feſtival. But *Jonathan* laying before his Soldiers the abſolute Neceſſity of Fighting; the Enemy being before them, and the River behind them, there was no ſaving their Lives without it; and conſidering the Exigence of the Caſe, they called upon God for Victory, and in the ſame Inſtant reſolutely charged the Enemy, killing great Numbers of them upon the Spot.

In the Heat of this Action, *Bacchides* preſſed furiouſly upon the Perſon of *Jonathan*, who at the ſame Time made a Blow at him; but the other evaded it, *Jonathan* and his Company took to the River, and the Enemy not daring to follow them, got ſafe to the other Side.

Bacchides, after this withdrew into the Citidel of *Jeruſalem*, with the Loſs of one thouſand of his Men, where he fortified ſeveral ſtrong Cities and Places that had been demoliſhed

moliſhed before, as *Jericho*, *Emmaus*, *Bethoron*, *Bethel*, *Thamnatha*, *Pharathoni*, *Taphon*, and *Gazara*. Theſe Places he ſtrengthened with Walls and Towers, and with ſtrong Gariſons, to be ready for Excurſions to fall upon the Jews. But Care was taken above all the reſt, to make the Citadel of *Jeruſalem* impregnable; in which Place the chief Men's Sons of the Country were ſecured as Hoſtages.

Intelligence arrived about this Time, to the two other Brothers, *Jonathan* and *Simon*, that there was a ſplendid Wedding on Treaty, between one of the Sons of *Amaraus*, and the Daughter of an illuſtrious *Arabian*; the Sons of *Amaraus* were to be at the Wedding, and the Bride to be conducted in great Pomp from the City of *Gabatha*.

The Brothers embraced this Opportunity to revenge themſelves for the Death of their Brother, and haſtened away towards *Medaba*, to trepan the People who were to aſſiſt at the Wedding, into an Ambuſh that they had planted in the Mountains. Upon the arrival of the Bridegroom with his Bride, and a long Train of their Friends, the Party ſallied out upon them, and cut them all off, without ſaving ſo much as one Perſon, with their Wives, Children, and Friends, to the Number of four hundred; carrying off the Booty entire. After which Exploit they returned to their Quarters at Jordan.

When *Bacchides* had ſettled Garriſons in *Judea*, he returned to his Maſter; and for about two Years the Jews enjoyed ſome Tranquility.

But the apoſtate Jews, envying the Repoſe of *Jonathan* and his Party, ſolicited *Demetrius*, by their Proxies, that *Bacchides* might be ordered to reduce *Jonathan*, repreſenting it as a Thing ſo eaſily to be affected, that it required no more than one Night's Work to rid themſelves both of him and all his Soldiers by Surprize.

The King immediately yielded to the Propoſition, and diſpatched *Bacchides* away into *Judea* upon the Commiſſion, where he ſent his Letters to all the King's Friends and Officers, to give their Aſſiſtance toward the ſeizing of *Jonathan*.

They joined in Council to concert meaſures to enſnare him; and finding upon ſeveral Trials that all proved ineffectual (for *Jonathan* was cautious) the *Macedonian*, in a Tranſport of Rage, imputed the whole Miſcarriage to the Treachery of the apoſtate Jews; who, he ſaid, ſported with the King's Orders, and thereupon put fifty of their chief Men to Death.

Jonathan and his Brother, finding themſelves too weak for *Bacchides*, withdrew into the Wilderneſs, to a Village called *Bethbaſi*, and fortifyed it, in order to ſerve them for a Place of Retreat.

Upon this Intelligence, *Bacchides* marched againſt them with all his Power he was able to raiſe. And he opened his Trenches immediately againſt the Place, and for ſome Days carried on his Approaches. *Jonathan*, on the other Side, making a very obſtinate Reſiſtance.

While Affairs were thus circumſtanced, he left the Defence of the Place to his Brother, and with all the Force he could draw together out of the Neighbourhood, ſtole away by Night, fell upon *Bacchides* in his Quarters, killed a great Number of his Men, and from the Havoc and Confuſion that enſued it; at this Juncture, *Simon* hearing of his Brother's Slaughter, made a Sally, burnt their Machines, cut of a great Number of their People, and afterwards returned.

Bacchides was ſo alarmed at this Aſſault upon his Front and Rear, and the Miſcarriage of an Attempt he thought himſelf ſo ſure of, that for ſome Time it deprived him of his Reaſon. But all the Miſchiefs of this Miſcarriage were imputed to the Jewiſh Impoſtors, who had prevailed with the King, to undertake this Expedition. It remained now only to conſider how the Siege might be raiſed without Loſs of Honour, both to the King and himſelf, and to draw off without Diſgrace.

While *Bacchides* was deliberating on theſe Affairs, *Jonathan* embraced this Opportunity of accompliſhing his Deſign ſo eſſential to the true Intereſt of the Jews.

With this View he ſent him an honourable Embaſſy, with Propoſals of a mutual League and Friendſhip, on Condition of releaſing the Priſoners on both Sides.

This was a Motion ſo reaſonable in itſelf, and opportune for quitting the Siege without Loſs of Reputation, he immediately entered into an Alliance with *Jonathan*; with a mutual Exchange of Oaths to deliver up, and reſtore all Priſoners on both Sides, and not to commit any Act of Hoſtility one to another.

The Treaty being ratified, *Bacchides* returned to the King at *Antioch*, without coming back with his Army to *Judea*.

Jonathan being now ſettled in a State of Peace and Safety, took up his Abode in *Machmas*, where he applied himſelf to the Adminiſtration of Law and Juſtice.

He was a bitter Enemy to Deſerters, a zealous Aſſerter of the Laws, and purged the Land from all foreign Abominations.

In the Year one hundred and ſixty, *Alexander*, the Son of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, ſeized *Ptolemais* in *Syria*, through the Confideracy of the Soldiers, whoſe Averſion he had excited by a proud, arrogant Behaviour, as well as a peculiar Indolence of Diſpoſition, which cauſed him to neglect the Affairs of State, and devote himſelf intirely to Eaſe and Indulgence.

But the News of *Alexander*'s Fate, rouſed him from his Lethargy, and prompted him with all Expedition to gather his Forces, and march againſt him.

Demetrius, thus embaraſſed, ſent an Embaſſy to *Jonathan*, with Propoſals of an Alliance; this he did in order to anticipate any Treaty that he might enter into with *Alexander*, which would redound to his Diſadvantage.

The Purport of the Meſſage was,

An

An Authority to levy Men, to provide Arms, and to ſet the Hoſtages at Liberty, that *Bacchides* had committed Priſoners to the Caſtle.

Upon the Receipt of this Letter from *Demetrius*, *Jonathan* went to *Jeruſalem*, where he read it publicly, in the Hearing of the Garriſon, and of the People. The Fugitives in the Citidel were very much ſurprized to ſee *Jonathan* on a ſudden, ſo much in Favour with *Demetrius*.

He went on however with his Levies, ſet the Hoſtages at Liberty, and remanded them ſafe back to their Parents. He made *Jeruſalem*, for the Preſent, the Place of his Reſidence; where he fortified, altered, and repaired at Pleaſure; rebuilding and ſtrengthening the Walls, with large ſquare Stones for the better Defence of the Place.

The *Macedonians* that were diſperſed up and down in ſeveral Garriſons, quitted their Stations upon this Change at *Jeruſalem*, and went away to *Antioch*. But as for thoſe that were in *Bethſura*, and at the Tower in *Jeruſalem*, the major Part of them were Jewiſh Deſerters, it was not ſafe for them to ſtir out of their Holds and lurking Places.

Alexander was no Stranger to the Character of *Jonathan*, and particularly to his military Exploits againſt the *Macedonians*, nor the Indignities that they had put upon him, both by *Demetrius* and *Bacchides*; ſo that being told of the fair Promiſes of *Demetrius*, he laid the Matter before his Friends, who gave it as their Opinion, That the beſt Meaſures he could purſue at that Time, was to enter into an Alliance with *Jonathan*; a Perſon of eminent Valour, and a mortal Enemy to *Demetrius*, for divers Cauſes. Upon this a Reſolution was formed, with the Advice of Council, for an Application to *Jonathan*, which was concluded in the following Terms.

King Alexander *to his Brother* Jonathan, *ſendeth greeting.*

WHereas we have been long ſince given to underſtand, that thou art a Man of Honour, Faith and Courage, and in every Reſpect worthy of our Friendſhip, we have now ſent our Ambaſſadors to make thee a Tender of our Amity and Alliance, and to treat in our Name about it.

We do by theſe Preſents, and by our Royal Authority, ordain and pronounce thee to be the High Prieſt of the Jews, and adopt thee into the Roll of the King's Friends; ſending thee for a preſent likewiſe, a purple Robe, and a Crown of Gold, not doubting but that our Affection and Eſteem will be anſwered on thy Part with a ſuitable Return.

Jonathan, upon the arrival of this Meſſage, put on his Sacerdotal Robe, it being the Day of the Feaſt of Tabernacles. This was four Years after the Death of his Brother *Judas*, the pontifical Seat having been ſo long vacant, and from thence forward he applied himſelf to the Improvement of his Military Power.

De-

Demetrius was by this Time ſenſible of the Error of his Delay, in neglecting the Opportunity of being beforehand with his Competitor for an Alliance with *Jonathan*.

However, the Anticipation of *Alexander* did not yet hinder him from carrying it as far as it would go, in the following Letter.

King Demetrius *to* Jonathan, *and to the People of the Jews, greeting,*

WHereas we have hitherto ever found you true and faithful to your Duty, and to our Service, in deſpite of all the Arts and Practices of our Enemies to ſeduce you from your Allegiance, we cannot but give you ſome Inſtance of the Eſteem we have for your unſhaken Fidelity in Times paſt, and likewiſe of our ardent Deſire to give you all Encouragement to preſerve in the ſame, for the Time to come.

It is our Pleaſure therefore to remit the greateſt Part of your Tributes. And by theſe Preſents to eaſe you of all the Taxes that you formerly paid to my Predeceſſars, or to myſelf, over and above the Cuſtom of Salt, and Crown Taxes. The thirds of your Corn, and of your Fruits, I do diſcharge you of for ever; together with the Poll-Tax upon the Inhabitants of Judea, *and the three Governments of* Samaria, Galilee, *and* Peræa.

I will, that the City of Jeruſalem *be accounted holy, and have the Privileges of a Sanctuary, or City of Refuge, with an Exemption both to itſelf, and its Dependencies, from all Tenths and Tributes. The Citadel ſhall be delivered up to the High Prieſt,* Jonathan, *with Liberty to put into it, for a Garriſon, ſuch of his Friends and Confidents as he ſhall make Choice of.*

It is our further Pleaſure, That every Jew *who was carried away Priſoner into any Part of our Dominions, be forthwith ſet at Liberty, without impoſing any Hardſhips, after this Decree, ſo much as upon their Cattle, either by Preſs-Maſters, or otherwiſe. That all their Sabbaths and ſolemn Feſtivals, and three Days before them, ſhall be Days of Immunity and Freedom to every* Jew *in our Dominion, that they may live quietly, without any Sort of Moleſtation. And for ſo many of the* Jews, *within the Compaſs of thirty thouſand Men, as may deſire to bear Arms in our Service, they ſhall be entertained at the ſame Rate with our own Guards, and inſtructed alſo in our Garriſons, and about our Perſon, and the better Sort of them ſhall be received as Domeſtics of our Royal Family.*

Moreover, they ſhall have the free Exerciſe of their own Laws, both in Jeruſalem, *and in the three dependent Provinces; committing it to the High Prieſt's Care, to ſee that no* Jew *be ſuffered to worſhip in any other Temple but that of* Jeruſalem.

We do hereby grant them likewiſe the Yearly Allowance of fifteen thouſand Shekles of Silver toward the Charge of their Sacrifices out of our own Coffers, and diſcharge the Prieſts and Officers attending the Service of the Temple, of the

the ten thouſand Drachma's that were formerly paid to our Predeceſſors, as in Reaſon we ought to do.

It is our farther Will, That whoſoever ſhall fly to the Temple of Jeruſalem, *or to the Liberties thereof, for any Debt, whether to the King or otherwiſe, ſhall be protected, both in his Perſon and Goods, from any Trouble or Moleſtation.*

We likewiſe give Leave, and Require, that the Temple be repaired, ſtrong Walls and Turrets erected, and Garriſons put into ſuch Places as ye ſhall think fit to raiſe and fortify; and all this to be done at our own proper Charge.

Theſe were the Promiſes of *Demetrius*, who wrote to the Jews accordingly.

At this Juncture, *Alexander* raiſed a powerful Army, and advanced at the Head of it againſt the Enemy. An Engagement enſued, and the left Wing of *Demetrius* preſſing the right of *Alexander*, they purſued their Advantage ſo far, that they got much Plunder; but the right Wing, where the King fought in Perſon, was forced to give Way, and were totally routed.

Demetrius acquitted himſelf with gallantry, killing ſome, purſuing others, and defending himſelf, till at laſt his Horſe plunged into a bog, he was over powered by Multitudes that preſſed upon him, and could have no Relief. However, he fought on Foot, till his Body was covered with Darts and Arrows. Thus valiantly fell *Demetrius*, after a Reign of eleven Years.

CHAP. II.

Onias *obtains Permiſſion to build a Temple in* Egypt. *Conteſt between the* Jews *and* Samaritans, *relative to their Temple and Worſhip. Decided in Favour of the Jews. Advocates for the* Samaritans, *according to Agreement are adjudged to the Penalty of Death.* Jonathan *is highly honoured by* Alexander. *His Succeſs againſt his idolatrous Enemies. Is courteouſly received by King* Ptolemy. *Various Fortunes of* Ptolemy *and* Alexander. *Death of thoſe Princes.* Jonathan *inveſts* Jeruſalem. *Obtains the Sanction of* Demetrius.

ONIAS, the Son of *Onias* the high Prieſt, who lived in a Kind of Exile from his own Country, with *Ptolemy Philometor*, at *Alexandria*, finding *Judea* ſo terribly ravaged by the *Macedonians*; and deſirous of acquiring immortal Fame, reſolved to try if he could obtain Leave from King *Ptolemy*, and his Queen *Cleopatra*, to build in *Egypt*, after the Model of that of *Jeruſalem*, and to ſupply it with Prieſts and Levites of his own Family.

A Temple

This Deſign occurred to him from a Prediction of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, at leaſt ſix hundred Years before; preſaging that in Time to come there ſhould be a Temple erected in *Egypt*,

to the Honour of the great God, and that it ſhould be the Work of a Jew. *Onias* was ſo poſſeſſed with this Revelation, that he wrote a Letter to *Ptolemy* and *Cleopatra*, to this Effect: *When I had the Honour to ſerve your Majeſties in the Field, I paſſed through ſeveral Countries, and obſerved, that in the Provinces of* Celo-Syria, Phenice, *and* Leontopolis, *in the Land of* Heliopolis, *and in ſeveral other Places, the Jews had no Uniformity in their Temples, and therefore could not agree among themſelves about it; as is the Caſe with the* Egyptians, *by Reaſon of the Multitude of Temples, and the Diverſity of Religions.*

As I have found out a certain Place near the Caſtle of Bubaſtes *upon the Plain, where there great Store of Materials for building, and Plenty of Beaſts appointed for Sacrifice, it is my humble Requeſt, that you will permit me to purge and demoliſh a ruinous Temple there, that was never conſecrated to any Deity, and in the Place of it to erect another, after the Model of that at* Jeruſalem, *with a Dedication of it to the moſt high God, upon Condition, that Prayers be there offered up for the Safety and Proſperity of your Royal Perſons and Family; to the End that all the Jews in you Dominions may by this Means be united, and better enabled to do your Majeſties Service. This is no more than what the Prophet* Iſaiah *had foretold, that God would have a holy Place in* Egypt.

The Piety that the King, and his Queen *Cleopatra* expreſſed upon the Receipt of the Letter, will appear by their Anſwer, wherein they diſcharged themſelves of having any Hand in the impious Violation of the Law, and caſt the whole Blame of it upon *Onias* in theſe Terms:

King Ptolemy *and Queen* Cleopatra *to* Onias, *Joy and Health.*

WE *have read and conſidered your Letter of Requeſt, wherein you deſire to cleanſe and purify an old ruinous Temple at* Leontopolis *near* Bubaſtes *upon the Plain, within the Juriſdiction of* Heliopolis, *and can hardly conceive how a Temple in a Place ſo unclean, and haunted with ſuch Varieties of deteſtable Animals, ſhould be in any Meaſure acceptable to God. But as you refer yourſelf for Juſtification to the Predictions of the Prophet* Iſaiah, *we do hereby grant unto you full Licence and Permiſſion, provided it be done without giving Offence to God in the Breach of his Laws.*

Onias had no ſooner obtained this Conceſſion, than he applied himſelf to the raiſing of the Temple and the Altar, according to the Draught of that at *Jeruſalem*, though it was much ſhort of it both for Bulk and Magnificence. Having thus accompliſhed his Deſign, *Onias* did not want Prieſts and Levites of his own Perſuaſion to aſſiſt him in the Divine Worſhip, and in the Services of the Temple.

There happened at *Alexandria* a violent Diſpute, between the Jews and the Samaritans that erected the Tem-

Temple at *Garizin*, in the Days of *Alexander* the Great, concerning that Temple and the Manner of worſhipping, ſo that the King was forced upon an Appeal to take the Matter into his own Cognizance, and paſs Judgment upon the Merits of the Cauſe.

The Point was this: The Jews inſiſted that the Temple at *Jeruſalem* was the only Temple extant that was warranted and authorized by the Laws of *Moſes*. The Samaritans ſtood up for the Temple of *Garizin*, and both Parties by Conſent referred themſelves to the Arbitration of the King, with his Miniſters and Counſellors, deſiring only that Council might be heard on both Sides, and that Sentence of Death might paſs upon the Party that ſhould be found guilty.

Sabbeus and *Theodoſius* were for the Samaritans, and *Andronicus* the Son of *Meſſalan*, for the Jews; binding themſelves by Oath on both Sides, in the Preſence of God and the King, to offer nothing in proof, but what was according to the Law, and deſiring that the Breach of that Oath might be made Death.

The King called his Friends and Counſellors about him to try the Cauſe. The Jews of *Alexandria* were greatly concerned leaſt their Advocate might be unequal to the important Cauſe, and much grieved to find the ſacred Authority of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, the moſt antient and noble Frame and Inſtitution in the whole World, brought into Queſtion.

Upon a Debate who ſhould ſpeak firſt, *Sabbeus* and *Theodoſius* gave the Precedence to *Andronicus*, who opened the Cauſe, and elaborately ſet forth the Sanctity, and venerable Antiquity of the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, even from the very original, according to the Law; obſerving the uninterrupted Succeſſion of the Prieſthood through all Ages, with the Honour and Majeſty of the Place, as it was celebrated from Time to Time, with the Magnificence and Bounty of all the Kings of *Aſia*; whereas the Temple of *Garizin*, then in Queſtion, was ſo obſcure in all Reſpects, that little more Notice was taken of it.

By theſe and other powerful Arguments the King was prevailed upon to give Sentence in Favour of *Jeruſalem*, and to adjudge *Sabbeus* and *Theodoſius* to death, according to the Conditions of the Propoſal. This was the State of Affairs with the *Alexandrian* Jews in the Days of *Ptolemy Philometor*.

After the Death of *Demetrius*, *Alexandria* took upon himſelf the Government of *Syria*; and by a Letter to *Ptolemy Philometor*, ſent him a Propoſal of a Match with his Daughter, ſuggeſting, that it would neither be diſhonourable or unreaſonable after the Overthrow of *Demetrius*, and, (through God's Favour,) the Recovery of a Kingdom that belonged to him in Right of his Father, to receive him into his Alliance.

Ptolemy was ſo well pleaſed with this Overture, that he immediately wrote him a Letter congratulating him

him upon all his Victories and Succeſſes, promiſing him his Daughter in Marriage, and appointing *Ptolemais* for the Place of Meeting; where he would wait upon him with his Daughter *Cleopatra*, and there conſummate the Nuptials. *Ptolemy* went directly to the Place with his Daughter, where he found *Alexander*, and celebrated the Marriage, with ſuch a Treaſure of Gold and Silver for her Portion as become the Magnificence of ſo great a Prince. *Jonathan* the high Prieſt was invited by *Alexander* to the Nuptials, where both the Kings welcome him with Honour and Preſents on both Sides; *Alexander* appointing him to change his Habit, put on a Purple Robe, and take his Place next to himſelf upon the Throne, commanding alſo the chief Officers to attend him into the Heart of the City, and make Proclamation that no Man ſhould preſume, upon his Peril, either to calumnate, accuſe, or otherwiſe give him the leaſt Moleſtation.

Such were the Kindneſs and Reſpect that *Alexander* had for *Jonathan*, that he reckoned him among the choiceſt of his Friends, and treated him with every Token of Eſteem.

At this Time *Demetrius*, the Son of the late *Demetrius*, embarked with a Body of Mercenaries, and paſſed with them out of *Crete* into *Cilicia*. *Alexander* alarmed at the News of this Expedition, haſtened from *Phenice* to *Antioch*, to put Affairs in a Poſture of Defence before *Demetrius* could get thither; committing the Government of *Cæle-Syria*, in the mean Time, to the Care of *Apollonius*, who marched with an Army to *Jamnia*, and thence ſent *Jonathan* the High Prieſt an expoſtulatory Meſſage, demanding *What Privilege he had to live at Eaſe and Liberty, and to withdraw himſelf from the Service of the Public?*

The Scandal, ſaid he, *is laid at my Door, for ſuffering this Affront, without reducing you to Subjection. If you are as brave as you would be thought to be, come down from your Hiding-Places in the Mountains, and meet me like a Man upon the Plain, Sword in Hand, and caſt the Iſſue of the Cauſe upon that Trial.*

I am now at the Head of a Body of the choiceſt Men in the Empire, and Men that in Feats of Arms have ever had the Aſcendant of your Anceſtors. Wherefore I dare you once again to give me a Meeting in ſome indifferent Place, where Swords, not Stones, ſhall decide the Controverſy, and leave the vanquiſhed Party no Poſſibility of ſaving themſelves by Flight.

Jonathan was ſo incenſed with the inſolent Challenge, that he marched out of *Jeruſalem* with ten thouſand choſen Men, and his Brother *Simon* with him; and coming up to *Joppa*, encamped there. But *Apollonius* having a Garriſon in the Town, they ſhut their Gates againſt him, ſo that he put himſelf in Poſture for an Aſſault; whereupon the Inhabitants, through Fear of a Storm, delivered up the Place.

When *Apollonius* underſtood that his Antagoniſt was poſſeſſed of *Joppa*, he

he betook himſelf with three thouſand Horſe and eight thouſand Foot to *Azotus*, and from thence, by eaſy Marches, to *Joppa*; where he drew off a little to engage *Jonathan* in the open Plain, depending upon his Superiority of Numbers.

Jonathan advanced; who, when he found the Enemy in a plain Field, gave him Battle. *Apollonius* had planted a thouſand Horſe in an Ambuſh near a Brook, to fall upon the Enemy's Rear, which *Jonathan* was aware of, and without any Difficulty, prevented; for, drawing up his Men in a Square, that fronted every Side, ſo that they were ready on all Hands to receive the Charge.

The Engagement continued till Evening, when *Jonathan* ordered his Brother *Simon*, with Part of his Army, to charge the Enemy's main Body, having commanded his own Men only to receive the Darts and Arrows of the Horſe upon their Bucklers, without any other Reſiſtance.

They kept themſelves upon their Guard, till the Enemy had expended all their offenſive Weapons, without doing any Execution; for they ſtood ſo thick, that their Darts fell upon their Bucklers, which they could not pierce.

The Enemy was ſo ſpent with this Manner of fighting, from Morning till the Afternoon, that *Simon* took that Opportunity of attacking their main Body; and was ſo bravely ſeconded by his Soldiers, that he broke and put them to flight.

The Horſe, upon this Attack, fled in the greateſt Confuſion imaginable. *Jonathan* cloſely purſued them as far as *Azatos*, killing great Numbers, and forcing the reſt into the Temple of *Dagon*, for Sanctuary. He alſo took the City, ſet fire to it, and ſeveral neighbouring Villages, and burnt them all to the Ground, together with the Temple of *Dagon*, and all the People that fled to it for Protection.

The Number of thoſe that were burnt, or fell by the Sword, was computed to amount to eight thouſand Men.

After the Defeat of this Army, *Jonathan* advanced with his Troops to *Aſkalon*, and pitched his Tent before the City; the Inhabitants coming out to him, and treating him with many Preſents and Tokens of Reſpect.

After this he returned to *Jeruſalem* victorious, and laden with Spoil. In Conſequence of this Victory *Alexander* affected an extraordinary Approbation of the Conduct of *Jonathan*; and, as a Mark of his Eſteem, preſented him with a Golden Buckle, an Honour peculiar only to the Royal Family; and conferred on him the Government of *Accaron*.

At the ſame Time, *Ptolemy Philometer*, with both Land and Sea Forces, came into Syria, to the Aſſiſtance of his Son in Law, *Alexander*, where he was received with great Honour, according to the King's Order in *Azotus*.

In this Place he was accoſted with Complaints, of the burning of *Dagon*'s Temple, every one exclaiming againſt *Jonathan*, as the Author of

that Outrage, beſide the Havock he had made in the Country by Fire and Sword. *Ptolemy* heard theſe Complaints, without returning any Anſwer. *Jonathan* met him at *Joppa*, and was received with Magnificence and Honour; and after conducting the King to the River *Eleutherus*, returned to *Jeruſalem*.

When *Ptolemy* arrived in the City of *Ptolemais*, a Plot was laid againſt his Life, by the Treachery of *Alexander*, and conducted by his Friend *Ammonius*.

This Device being diſcovered, he wrote to *Alexander*, to demand Juſtice. But *Alexander* refuſing to deliver *Ammonius* up, convinced him that he himſelf had been concerned in it.

From his Attachment to this infamous Perſon, he now incurred the Hatred of *Ptolemy*, as he had before done of the People of *Antioch*. But the Traitor ſoon after met with a deſerved Fate.

Ptolemy, incenſed at the Perfidy and Ingratitude of *Alexander*, determined to diſclaim all Relationſhip to him; and therefore took away his Daughter from her Huſband, entered into a League with *Demetrius* againſt *Alexander*, on Condition of giving him *Cleopatra* in Marriage, and putting him in Poſſeſſion of his Father's Kingdom.

Demetrius was well pleaſed, both with the Alliance and the Woman. But the People of *Antioch* had ſuch an Averſion to *Demetrius*, on his Father's Account, that *Ptolemy* had a hard Taſk to perſuade them to receive him for their King, whom they looked upon as their Enemy. Yet ſuch was their Hatred to *Alexander* upon the Score of *Ammonius*, that they were prevailed upon to free the City of *Amonius*; who thereupon eſcaped into *Cilicia* from *Antioch*.

Ptolemy upon this, made his Entrance into *Antioch*, where he was ſaluted, proclaimed and crowned King, both by the Burgers and the Soldiery, that is, in the Right of *Aſia*, and of *Egypt*.

As he was a perſon of a juſt, temperate and deſcreet Diſpoſition, he managed his Affairs to the intire Satisfaction of his own People; and likewiſe without giving any Cauſe of Jealouſy or Envy to the Romans.

After his Proclamation, he called a general Council of the Antiochians, and endeavoured to attach them to *Demetrius* as their King, aſſuring, that the Senſe of the preſent Obligation would utterly extinguiſh the Remembrance and Miſ-underſtandings paſt; and undertaking himſelf to take Care, that in the Adminiſtration of the Government he ſhould not ſo much as offer to commit an Action unworthy of his Dignity and Truſt repoſed in him.

Upon this Repreſentation and Aſſurance, the whole Body of the People was prevailed upon to take *Demetrius* for their King.

Alexander was at this Time ravaging *Syria*, and the Country about *Antioch*, with Fire and Sword, at the Head of a numerous and powerful Army, that he brought out of *Cilicia*; when *Ptolemy*, with his Son in Law

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Demetrius (the Nuptials being celebrated) encountered and routed him, forcing him to fly to *Arabia*.

It happened in that Battle that *Ptolemy*'s Horſe taking Fright at the Braying of an Elephant, threw his Rider, and gave his Enemies the Advantage of giving him many Wounds upon the head, which Misfortune would certainly have coſt him his Life upon the Spot, if he had not been reſcued by a Party of his Guards. But ſuch was his Condition, that he lay Speechleſs for four Days, or underſtanding what was ſaid to him. Upon the fifth Day, when he was recovering a little, one *Zabelus*, an Arabian Prince, having cut off *Alexander*'s Head, ſent it to *Ptolemy*, who was greatly pleaſed, both with the Action, and the Spectatle. But he had not long indulged his Eye with this Sight, before he was ſummoned to pay that Debt from which no Mortal is exempt.

Demetrius, ſucceeded *Alexander*; he was a Man of a rough, rugged Temper, without Regard to the Obligations and Services he had received from them, upon the Credit of an Affinity with *Cleopatra*. This Conduct ſo diſguſted the Soldiers, that they deſerted his Cauſe, and haſtened to *Alexandria*, leaving only the Elephants behind them.

Jonathan the High Prieſt, having drawn together all the Force he was able to raiſe in *Judea*, inveſted the Citadel of *Jeruſalem*, with a Reſolution to diſlodge the Macedonian Garriſon, and the fugitive Jews that had taken ſanctuary there.

Confident of the Strength of the Place, they bid him Defiance; but in ſhort were compelled to ſend privately to *Demetrius* for Succour. This Intelligence ſo incenſed him, that he immediately marched out with his Army from *Antioch* toward *Jonathan*; and upon his arrival at *Ptolemais*, ſent for him by Letter to come to him.

Jonathan, upon this Invitation, took with him ſeveral rich Preſents; and, attended by the Prieſts and Elders, laid them before *Demetrius*.

This Expedient ſo molified the King, that he received the Preſents with the utmoſt Complacency, and in Token of the Obligation conferred on him by *Jonathan*, that he confirmed the Pontificate, with which he had been veſted by his Predeceſſors, and was ſo far from giving Credit to the Calumny and Suggeſtions of the fugitive Jews againſt their Countrymen, that upon *Jonathan*'s Requeſt for an Abatement of the Tribute of *Judea*, together with the Dependencies of *Samaria*, *Joppa*, and *Galilee*, to the amount of * three hundred Talents. Hereupon he cauſed the following Declaration to be made in their Favour.

* Three hundred Syrian Talents, were in value worth twelve thouſand eight hundred and thirty two Pounds, ſeven pence halfpenny of our Money.

King

King Demetrius *to his Brother* Jonathan, *and to the whole* Jewiſh *Nation, joy and greeting.*

THIS *is to inform you, that we have here ſent you the Copy of a Letter lately written to* Laſthenes, *our truſty and well-beloved Couſin.*

King Demetrius *to his Father* Laſthenes, *greeting.*

We are ſo ſenſible of the dutiful and affectionate return we have from Time to Time received from our Friends the Jews, *in an Acknowledgment of the Good-will we bear them, that it is our good Pleaſure to give them ſome ſignal Mark of the Eſteem we have for them.*

Wherefore, we do by theſe Preſents aſſign the three Governors of Apherema, Lydda *and* Ramathem, *that were taken from the* Samaritans, *together with all the Land thereunto belonging, to the Uſe and Advantage of* Judea, *diſcharging likewiſe the Prieſts at* Jeruſalem *of all the Duties by them formerly allowed to our Forefathers, as well upon Corn and Fruits, as upon Salt-pits and Crown-taxes, with an expreſs Caution and Prohibition that nothing of this be expected from them for the future.*

Be ſure to ſend the Copy of this Letter to Jonathan, *and to have it hung up in the moſt conſpicuous Place of the holy Temple.*

Affairs were now ſettled in ſo amicable a Manner, that *Demetrius*, flattering himſelf into an Opinion, that there was no longer any Danger, diſcharged his Army without their full Pay, retaining only a Body of Mercenaries that he had raiſed in *Crete*, and other of the neighbouring Iſlands: ſo that diſmiſſing his Father's old Troops without any Stipend, contrary to the Practice of his Anceſtors, who paid them in Peace as well as in War, and kept them in Readineſs to ſerve upon any Occaſion; he, by that Means, loſt the Affection of his People.

CHAP. III.

Jonathan *beſiegeth the Tower of* Jeruſalem, *aſſiſts* Demetrius *with a Supply of Troops. Affords him Succour upon an important Occaſion, but receives an ungrateful Return.* Demetrius *routed by* Jonathan *in Alliance with* Antiochus *and* Tryphon. Jonathan *ſurprized by an Ambuſh.* Matthias *and* Judas *make a valiant Defence.* Jonathan *ſends an Embaſſy to* Rome *and* Lacedemon, *and obtains a League with thoſe Nations. The* Jewiſh *Sects.* Jonathan *and* Simon *undertake to fortify* Jeruſalem. Demetrius *routed and taken Priſoner.*

THIS Defection of the Army from *Demetrius* was ſo notorious, that *Diodotus*, otherwiſe called *Tryphon*, a Native of *Apamia*, and formerly an Office under *Alexander*, availing himſelf of the Accuſation, applied to *Malchus* an *Arabian*, who was

was at that Time Governor of young *Antiochus*, the Son of *Alexander*, informing him how deſperately the Soldiers were bent againſt *Demetrius*, and propoſing, if *Malchus* would put *Antiochus* into his Hands, he made no Doubt of getting him reſtored to his Father's Throne.

Malchus was at firſt diffident of the Execution of his Promiſe; but by the Force of Entreaty, he was in a ſhort Time brought to a Compliance.

During theſe Tranſactions *Jonathan* the high Prieſt laid cloſe Siege to the Citadel at *Jeruſalem*, with a Reſolution to clear, not only that Caſtle, but other ſtrong Holds, where the fugitive *Jews* ſheltered themſelves; inſomuch that he ſent an Embaſſy to *Demetrius* with Preſents deſiring him to withdraw all his Men that were in any of the Fortreſſes of *Judea*; *Demetrius* aſſured him that he was ready to gratify him, not only in that, but in a greater Matter, as ſoon as he could diſpatch the Preſent War, which ſo employed him at that Time, that he was not at Liberty to attend any Thing elſe; but adjured *Jonathan* by all that was ſacred in Friendſhip, to ſend him a Supply of Men, as his own Troops, were gone over to the Eenemy. *Jonathan* ſoon after this ſent the King a Reinforcement of three Thouſand choice Men.

The People of *Antioch* were ſo enraged againſt *Demetrius*, both for his Father's Sake and his own, that they deſired nothing more than an Opportunity for Revenge; wherefore upon the News of this Relief from *Jonathan*, and Reconſideration of the Hazard of his growing ſtronger and ſtronger, if they were not before Hand with him, they betook themſelves to their Arms, and immediately beſet the Palace, as if they were ready to give the Aſſault. But their chief Buſineſs was rather to ſecure the Avenues, and ſeize the King as he was coming out.

Demetrius finding himſelf thus beſet, drew up his foreign Mercenaries, together with *Jonathan*'s Auxiliaries, and charged the Enemy, but met with a ſmart Repulſe, and was obliged to retreat. The Jews, upon this Retired into the Palace, where they mounted the Battlements; and from thence with Darts and Arrows ſo galled the Enemy, that they forced them from one Houſe to another, without ſuſtaining much Loſs to themſelves.

The next Thing they did, was to fire the City, which being for the greater Part built of Wood, and the Houſes ſtanding cloſe, was eaſily affected. The Inhabitants finding that the Fire could not be extinguiſhed, ſhifted for themſelves: the Jews ſtill purſuing them as before, and doing great Execution.

This Rout put an End to their Fighting; and all that now remained, was to ſave their Wives and Children. But the Jews took Advantage of their Confuſion, and falling upon them, according to the King's Order, killed great Numbers of them in the

Purſuit, and forced the reſt to lay down their Arms, and ſurrender at Diſcretion.

This Victory put an End to the War; the Rebellion being pardoned, the Booty was given to the Jews, whom *Demetrius* ſent back to *Jonathan*, with a moſt honourable Teſtimony of their Valour, acknowledging that it was to their Courage he ſtood indebted for that Succeſs. But this Spirit of Gratitude did not poſſeſs him long; for he afterward, not only broke his Promiſe, but threatened him with a War, if he ſhould not, for the future, make good thoſe Tributes to himſelf, which the Jews had formerly paid to his Predeceſſors. He would have put his Threats into Execution, if *Tryphon* had not diverted him, by forcing him to make Uſe of that Army againſt himſelf, which he had deſigned againſt *Jonathan*, who being now returned out of *Arabia* into *Syria*, with young *Antiochus*, ſet the Crown upon his Head, and by the Help of the Soldiers, who had been defrauded of their Pay, made open War upon *Demetrius*, defeated him in a pitched Battle, made himſelf Maſter of his Elephants, and of the City of *Antioch*, and forced him back into *Cilicia*.

Antiochus, upon this Reſolution, ſent an Embaſſy to *Jonathan*, and acknowledged him his Friend and Ally, eſtabliſhed him in the Pontificate, put him in the Poſſeſſion of the four Governments that were aſſigned to *Judea*, and gave his Brother *Simon* the Command of all his Forces, from *Tyre* to the Borders of *Sidon*; preſenting *Jonathan* over and above, with ſeveral Cups of Gold, purple Garments with a golden Buckle, and the Privilege of uſing and wearing theſe Enſigns of State, and adopting him alſo into the Roll of his choiceſt Friends.

Jonathan was ſo ſenſible of the multiplied Bounties, and Marks of Honour he had received from *Antiochus*, that he forthwith diſpatched an Expreſs to *Antiochus* and *Tryphon*, with a moſt affectionate Tender of his Friendſhip and Service, with his Readineſs to join againſt *Demetrius* as a common Enemy; reflecting upon him alſo, as the moſt ungrateful of Men, in returning ſo much Evil for all the Service he had done him.

No ſooner had *Jonathan* the Commiſſion for raiſing of Men, than he began to raiſe Levies in *Syria* and *Phenice*, and from thence proceeded to all the neighbouring Towns and Cities, where he was received with great Honour, but raiſed no Recruits.

Upon his coming afterward to *Aſkalon*, the People kindly entertained him; he took Occaſion to lay before them (as he did at other Places in *Celo-Syria*) how much it was their Intereſt and Duty to take up Arms againſt *Demetrius* in Behalf of *Antiochus*, having ſo fair an Opportunity to be revenged of him for the Injuries he had done them.

He wrought upon them ſo effectually by his Advice, that they promiſed Supplies. But advancing afterward

ward to *Gaza* upon the ſame good Office to *Antiochus*, he found, to his great Admiration, the Gates ſhut againſt him, and the People obſtinately reſolved to abide by *Demetrius*.

Jonathan incenſed at this Indignity, divided his Army and aſſaulting the Town with one Part, with the other went up and down to burn and lay waſte the Country.

The Inhabitants of *Gaza*, after a ſhort time, ſeeing nothing but inevitable deſtruction before their eyes, no Appearance of any relief from *Demetrius*; nor, ſo much as the Hope of any at ſo remote a Diſtance, upon ſecond Thought judg'd it moſt adviſable to make a ſeaſonable and ſubmiſſive Application to *Jonathan* by their Deputies, who were as frankly received on the other Hand into his Intereſt and Friendſhip.

Jonathan, in fine, accepted of their Propoſals and Hoſtages, and ſent them away to *Jeruſalem*, paſſing himſelf through the Country to *Damaſcus*.

Demetrius in the mean while had a ſtrong Army encamped before *Cades*, upon the Boders of *Tyre* and *Galilee*, with a Deſign to draw *Jonathan* out of *Syria* by Way of Diverſion, to the Aſſiſtance of *Galilee*, on a Preſumption that he would attend to the Intereſt of his own Country in Preference to all others; but this did not hinder *Jonathan* from advancing with all ſpeed to encounter him, leaving his brother *Simon* in his Abſence to take care of *Judea*.

Simon at the ſame time, with what Men he could get together out of that Country, marched up to *Bethſura*, and aſſaulted it, though accounted the ſtrongeſt and moſt defenſible Place in all *Judea*, and in the Hands of the Faction of *Demetrius*. When the Gariſon found themſelves ſo preſs'd with Works and Engines, that the Place ſeem'd to be in ſome Danger, they ſent a Meſſenger to *Simon*, for leave to quit the Place, and without any Moleſtation or Violence, to march away to *Demetrius*.

They were brought to theſe Terms, by the Apprehenſion of being all put to the Sword, if the Place was taken by Force. *Simon* granted them their own Conditions, and put another Garriſon in the Place of what was there before.

Jonathan at this Time departing from the Place, where he had firſt encamped, advanced in the Plain of *Aſor*, not in the leaſt ſuſpecting any Enemy upon that quarter; but a Party of *Demetrius*, having Intelligence of his Deſign the Day before, plac'd an Ambuſh under a Mountain, and marched toward him with their Body in the open Plain.

As ſoon as *Jonathan* ſaw them in order of Battle, and ready to charge, he gave his Men the beſt Orders he could in ſo ſhort a Time, how to govern themſelves in the Action; but when the *Jews* came to diſcover the Ambuſh, they turn'd their Backs immediately, for Fear of being pent up betwixt the two Bodies, and cut off.

The Terror was ſo general, that *Jonathan* had hardly a Man to ſtand by him, ſaving only two Captains of his Guards, *Mattathias* the Son of

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Abſalom, and *Judas* the Son of *Calphi*, who, with a Band of fifty brave Men, ſtood their Ground, and made ſo deſperate a Charge on the Enemy's Front, that *Jonathan*'s Deſerters finding the Soldiers of *Demetrius* in Confuſion, and almoſt ready to run, rallied; and falling upon them afreſh, killed two thouſand upon the Spot, put to Fight the reſt, and purſued them to *Cades*, up to their very Tents.

Jonathan, after this glorious Victory, returned to *Jeruſalem*; and in this height of Succeſſes ſent Ambaſſadors to Rome, with a Commiſſion to renew an Alliance with them, and with Orders to go to *Lacedemon* in their return, upon the ſame Account. His Propoſals were accepted, and his Ambaſſadors honourably treated, and diſpatch'd away with Letters recommendatory to the Kings of *Europe* and *Aſia* for their ſafe Paſſage. They called likewiſe upon the *Lacedemonians*, in their Way back again, and preſented them with Letters, as follow:

Jonathan the High-Prieſt, and the Elders of the Nation, the Prieſts, and other People of the Jews, unto the Ephori, the Senate, and the People of the *Lacedemonians*, their Brethren, ſend greeting:

WHEREAS we find in a Letter of a remote date from Arius *your King, to* Onias *our High-prieſt, (a copy whereof we ſend you here encloſed) importing a near Affinity of Blood betwixt us: and whereas it appeareth alſo by the Teſtimony we then rendered to* Arius *himſelf, with what joy we received the Intimation of ſuch an Alliance in that Letter; this gives you to underſtand, that we ſhould have put in our claim to the honour of your Friendſhip before, but that we were not willing to prevent you in the Glory of leading the Example. Be pleaſed to take notice, however, that from the firſt ratification of an Amity betwixt us to this Day, we have never forgotten you in our Prayers to God for your Proſperity, Health, and Victory over all your Enemies; and we have been as tender likewiſe in all our Sufferings and Diſtreſſes, under the Perſecution of our covetous and ambitious Neighbours, not to involve, either yourſelves, or any other of our Friendly Allies, in our Troubles; but our Circumſtances being now eaſier, and our Wars, by God's Providence, over, we have ſent* Numenius, *the Son of* Antiochus, *and* Antipates, *the Son of* Jaſon, *being Senators and men of Honour, to the* Romans, *and with Letters alſo to yourſelves for the ſtrengthening and renewing of a Friendly Underſtanding betwixt us. Be pleaſed to return us what Anſwer you ſhall think meet, and let us underſtand wherein we may be uſeful to you; in a full Truſt and Confidence, that you ſhall find us ever ready to ſerve you in all Offices of Affection and Reſpect.*

The *Lacedemonians* not only gave the Jewiſh Ambaſſadors, an honourable Reception, but a Memorial, which were formed and confirmed by pub-

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lic Authority, teſtifying the Friendſhip and Alliance between the two States.

The Jews were divided at this Time into three Sects, the Phariſees, Sadduces, and Eſſenes.

The Phariſees held, that Men were ſubjected to a Fatality, in ſome Caſes, and left at Liberty in others, to act as they pleaſed.

The Sadduces did not allow of any Fatality; but that every Man had it in his own Power to make his Condition better or worſe, according as he purſued right or wrong Meaſures.

The Eſſenes, on the other Hand, acknowledged no other Power than that of an over-ruling Deſtiny, working according to the Pre-determination of an irreſtible Fate.

The Officers of *Demetrius* were now advanced toward *Jonathan*, at the Head of a numerous Army, in Hopes of retrieving the Reputation he had loſt by their late Overthrow. But *Jonathan* having Intelligence that they were approaching, advanced to meet them at *Amathias*, with a Reſolution to oppoſe their Paſſage into *Judea*, encamping himſelf within fifty Furlongs of the Enemy, and ſending Scouts abroad for Diſcovery of their Motions.

Upon the Return of the Spies, he found that their Deſign was to ſurprize him in his Quarters; ſo that he put every Thing into a Poſture of Defence, planted his Out-Scouts to the beſt Advantage, and kept his Men under Arms, informing them of the Enemy's Deſign.

When the Officers, of *Demetrius* underſtood that their Plot was diſcovered, they were greatly embarraſſed in what Manner to proceed, and at length came to a Determination to depart under Covert of the Night.

The next Morning, by Dawn of Day, *Jonathan* marched up with a Reſolution to force the Camp; when finding it abandoned, he poſted away after the Fugitives, but to no Purpoſe; for they had paſſed the River *Elentherus*, into a Place of Safety, before he could reach them.

He took his Courſe next into *Arabia*, ravaged the Country of the *Nabatheans*, took a great many Cattle, and Priſoners, and ſold them at *Damaſcus*.

Simon at the ſame Time made a Progreſs through *Judea* and *Paleſtine*, as far as *Askalon*, where he garriſoned all Places of Defence; and after fortifying and ſecuring the Country, marched to *Joppa*, took Poſſeſſion of the Place, and placed a ſtrong Guard in it, to keep the Inhabitants in Awe, who would otherwiſe have betrayed the Town to *Demetrius*.

Having thus provided againſt all Caſualties, *Jonathan* and *Simon* returned to *Jeruſalem*, where the High Prieſt ſummoning the People togetheir into the Temple, ſet them upon repairing the ruinous Walls, both of the City, and the holy Place; fortifying them, with lofty and ſtrong Towers; adviſing them alſo to erect another Wall to cut off all Communication between the Caſtle and

the City, put good Garriſons into other convenient Places, and keep the country in a defencible Condition.

The People were highly pleaſed with this Counſel, ſo that he made it his own Province to take Care of the City, and committed the reſt to his Brother.

Demetrius having paſſed the River advanced into *Meſopotamia*, with a Deſign of making himſelf Maſter, not only of the Country, but of *Babylon* itſelf; propoſing alſo the Reduction of the Upper Provinces, to make that Quarter the Seat of War; for the Greeks and Macedonians therein, had ſent him ſeveral Embaſſies and Invitations to come over to them, with Aſſurances, That upon his appearing, they would ſubmit themſelves to his Direction, and aſſiſt him with their Arms againſt *Arſaces* the King of *Parthia*.

Encouraged by theſe Hopes *Demetrius* proceeded immediately toward them, concluding it would be eaſy to beat *Tryphon* out of *Syria*, after one powerful Defeat given to the *Parthians*.

Demetrius poſted away towards him, and was received by the People of that Country with great Acclamations, where he put himſelf at the Head of a brave Army, and made War with *Arſaces*, by whom he was utterly routed, his Army deſtroyed, and himſelf taken Priſoner.

CHAP. IV.

Jonathan *is made Priſoner, and his Army routed thro' the Treachery of* Tryphon. *Succeeded by* Simon, *who agrees with* Tryphon *for* Jonathan's *Releaſement.* Jonathan *murdered by* Tryphon. Simon *performs many Feats of Valour, in the glorious Cauſe of his Country. Farther Inſtances of the Perfidy of the Traitor, who is at length taken and ſlain.*

THE Fall of *Demetriuss* encouraged *Tryphon* to aſpire to the Crown; but as his ambitious Deſigns could not be promoted, while *Jonathan* (a true Friend to *Antiochus*) was in a Condition to oppoſe them; the firſt Thing to be done, was to contrive how to take him off. To this End he went from *Antioch* to *Bethſan*, where he found *Jonathan* with forty thouſand Men ready to ſerve him in caſe of Need.

Tryphon finding him in this Poſture, of Defence, made Uſe of Preſents; and fair Words to inveigle him, when he ſaw nothing could be affected by Force. He gave Charge to his Officers, to pay the ſame Reſpect and Obedience to *Jonathan* as they did to himſelf; propoſing by theſe Arts of Inſinuation, to veil the Treachery of his Heart, and create in him ſuch a Truſt and Confidence as might expoſe him, for Want of Caution, to Credulity and Surprize.

After

After a long Conference upon divers Subjects, he adviſed *Jonathan*, as the War was at an End, to diſcharge his Army, as an unneceſſary Burden, retaining only a competent Guard about his Perſon, which might go together to *Ptolemais*, as he was reſolved to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of that City, *For*, ſays he, *I am come hither to deliver thoſe Places into your Hands.*

Jonathan not ſuſpecting the Frand of the perfidious *Tryphon*, diſmiſſed all his Army, except three thouſand men, two thouſand of whom he left in *Galilee*, and carried the third with him in Company with *Tryphon* to *Ptolemais*.

He was no ſooner entered the Town, but the Inhabitants, according to their Inſtructions, ſhut their Gates upon him, took him Priſoner, and cut off all his Soldiers. Part of the Army was afterwards ſent to *Galilee*, with an Intent to maſſacre the other two thouſand there; but they having timely Notice of their Treachery to *Jonathan*, they betook themſelves to their Arms immediately upon the Report, and ſo made their eſcape. *Tryphon's* Soldiers were ſo well pleaſed with the Reſolution of theſe Men, that they let them eſcape without Moleſtation.

The Diſaſter which befel *Jonathan*, the Darling of the whole Jewiſh Nation, ſtruck the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* with univerſal Terror and Conſternation, and filled them with the moſt dreadful Apprehenſions of impending Danger, from the Loſs of their valiant Leader. Nor were their Fears without Foundation; for the Jews were diſperſed as a People deſtitute of a Head.

Tryphon levied an Army to make an Inroad into *Judea*. But *Simon* obſerving the Conſternation of the People, called them together, and addreſſed them in the following Manner.

I need not tell you, my Friends and Countrymen, how frankly I, my Father, and my Brethren, have expoſed ourſelves to the utmoſt Difficulty and Hazards, in aſſerting our common Liberty; ſo that it is no new Thing for our Family to lay down our Lives in the Defence of our Laws and Religion; neither am I ſo inſenſible of the Authority of thoſe Domeſtic Examples, as to be wrought upon by any Terror to the ſacrificing of my Honour and my Duty, for the ſaving of my Life.

Wherefore, without looking any farther for a Leader, you have a Man before you, who is ready to do or ſuffer any thing, for your Preſervation and Welfare; do but you only follow where I ſhall lead you.

I do not reckon myſelf better than my Brethren; neither do I value my Life at a higher Rate than they have done; nor am I ſo degenerate, as to think of ſaving that Life by Cowardice, when my Country and Religion are at Stake, which our Family has ever accounted as the moſt heroic of their Adventures.

No, my Friends and Brethren, it ſhall never be ſaid, that I have derogated from the Dignity of our Family.

I make no Doubt at all, but that God

God in his good Time will, even by my Hand, avenge you of your Enemies; deliver you, with your Wives and Children, from your Oppreſſors, and vindicate the holy Temple againſt the Abominations and Violence of your malicious Perſecutors.

The Multitude were ſo affected by this Speech and Declaration of *Simon*, that they preſently took Courage, ſuſpended their Fears, aud revived their Spirits, and unanimouſly exclaimed, *None ſo fit as* Simon *to ſucceed to the Command of his brave Brothers,* Judas *and* Jonathan; *and therefore let* Simon *be our General, and whatever he commands ſhall be obeyed.*

The new General collected as many of his People, as were fit to bear Arms, and ſet about the neceſſary Repairs of the Fortification of the City, which done, he ſent *Jonathan* the Son of *Abſalom*, to *Joppa*, with Orders to turn the Inhabitants out of Town, leſt they ſhould deliver it up to *Tryphon*, while he continued at *Jeruſalem*, to guard that City.

Tryphon was now upon his March with a great Army from *Ptolemais*; and arriving at *Judea*, brought *Jonathan* with him in Bonds.

Simon met him with his Troops near the City of *Addida*, upon a Mountain that overlooked the Plain. When *Tryphon* came to underſtand that the Jews had choſen *Simon* for their General, he ſent Meſſengers to him, to try if he could circumvent him alſo by a Plot. With this View he ſent him Word, that if he deſired the Releaſe of his Brother, he might ſend him an * hundred Talents of Silver, and two Sons of *Jonathan* with it as Hoſtages, that when he ſhould be ſet at Liberty, he ſhould not ſeduce *Judas* from their Allegience to the King, ſuggeſting at the ſame Time, that he was to be kept in Cuſtody only till the King's Money ſhould be paid.

Simon diſcerned the Fraud; but conſidering, on the one Hand, that though he run the Danger of loſing the Money, without obtaining his Brother's Releaſe, beſides the Delivery of his Sons to the Mercy of an Enemy, yet there occured Difficulties, on the other Hand, no leſs perplexing; for he was afraid that upon his denial of the Money for a Ranſom, or the Sons for Hoſtages, he ſhould be branded with the Odium of being acceſſary to his Brother's Death.

Upon this, he called a Council, told them *Tryphon*'s Demands; giving his Opinion alſo, that there was Treachery at the Bottom. But intimating, that it would be better to ſend both the Money and the Sons, at a Venture, than incur a Suſpicion, upon not harkening to *Tryphon*'s Conditions, of being leſs zealous than he ought to be for the Safety of his Brother. Therefore a Reſolution was

* An hundred Jewiſh Talents in Value amounted to thirty four thouſand two hundred and eighteen Pounds, fifteen ſhillings of our Money.

taken

taken to ſend both; though *Tryphon*, after he had received them, broke his Faith, and refuſed to releaſe *Jonathan*, ranging up and down with his Army, and ravaging the Country, till he came to *Dora*, a City of *Idumea*, with an Intention to make that in his Way to *Jeruſalem*, *Simon* keeping Pace with him in his Marches, and always encamped oppoſite to his Army.

While *Tryphon* was upon the Way, Word was brought him from *Jeruſalem*, that the Garriſon of the Citadel was ſore diſtreſſed for Want of Proviſions, and they deſired he would immediately haſte to their Relief.

Upon this Intelligence he ordered his Horſe to be in Readineſs, as he would march without any Delay to their Succour; but there fell ſo great a Snow that Night, that the Roads were impaſſable. Upon this Diſappointment he decamped, and went back to *Cele-Syria*: and paſſing thro' the Country of *Galaad*, cauſed *Jonathan*, near the City of *Baſcama*, to be ſlain, and buried there. And from thence returned to *Antioch*. *Simon* took Care however to remove his Brother's Bones to his Father's Sepulchre at *Modin*, where he erected a magnificent Monument to the Honour of his Family. It was raiſed upon an Eminence that overlooked the whole Country, and encompaſſed with arched Walks, reſting upon admirable Pillars of one entire Stone.

He had raiſed alſo ſeven Pyramids for his Father, Mother, four Brothers, and himſelf; a Work that was deemed as complete as any of the Kind in thoſe Days.

This ſhews the Care and Zeal of *Simon* to the Honour of his Family, and more particularly his Reſpect for the Memory of *Jonathan*, who had now governed the People in the Quality both of Prince and high Prieſt for the Space of four Years, his Brother *Simon*, by the univerſal Suffrage and Conſent of the People, ſucceeding him.

Simon had gained ſo great Eſteem and Authority among the People, that they dated their Writings, as well private as publick, in ſuch or ſuch a Year of *Simon* the Governor of the Jews, and with this Addition, the moſt deſerving Patron of the Nation; for under his Adminiſtration all Things ſucceeded, both in War and Peace, through the Advantages he brought to his Friends, and the Victory he obtained over the common Enemy; deſtroying the Cities of *Gaza*, *Joppa*, and *Jamnia*; laying the Citadel of *Jeruſalem* level with the Ground; and taking it moreover into his Care, in order to prevent the ſame Inconveniences for the Time to come.

In order to this he recommended digging up and levelling of the Mountain that the Caſtle ſtood upon, ſo as to leave the Temple upon the Advantage of the hither Ground. Upon this Caſe, he called an Aſſembly, and laid before them what Damage they had already ſuffered from this Caſtle, and what Inconvenience they might reaſonably expect from

it for the Time to come, if ever it ſhould fall into the Hands of an hoſtile Prince.

This Method of reaſoning wrought ſo effectually upon the Multitude, that they immediately ſet upon demoliſhing the Mountain, and plyed to it ſo hard Night and Day for three Years ſucceſſively, (doing Duty by Turns) that in the End, by indefatigable Labour, they brought it under the Command of the Temple.

Soon after the taking *Demetrius Nicanor* Priſoner, *Tryphon* ſecretly murdered his Pupil *Antiochus*, the Son of *Alexander*, in the fourth Year of his Guardianſhip, giving it out that it was only an unlucky Accident in his Exerciſes, that brought him to his End. While this Rumour was new, *Tryphon* made Intereſt among the Soldiers, through the Force of Friends and Money, to diſpoſe them to the Choice of himſelf for their next Governor. They obſerved, that *Demetrius* was a Priſoner to the Parthians, and *Antiochus* would never forget the Deſerters of his Brother.

By this Artifice *Tryphon* paved his Way to the Crown, nor was much Argument required to inforce his Cauſe, as all the People judged it would make their Fortune; ſo that they advanced him to the Throne without any farther Ceremony. This Elevation ſoon diſcovered the genuine Diſpoſition of the Tyrant, who immediately threw off the Mask he had artfully aſſumed to proſecute his Deſigns, and ſhewed himſelf to be a diſſolute Wretch in his Manners; his Adverſaries laid hold of it very much to his Diſadvantage; for the Soldiers quickly grew weary of his Tyranny, and went over to *Cleopatra*, the Wife of *Demetrius* who had then ſhut up herſelf in *Seleucia* with her Children, while *Antiochus*, (otherwiſe called *Soter*, and the Brother of *Demetrius*,) went roving up and down from Place to Place.

Cleopatra prompted by the Encouragement of the military Men that deſerted him, at the Inſtance and Perſuaſion of Friends, and the Apprehenſion ſhe herſelf had of the Seleucians giving up the Town to *Tryphon*, ſent a Meſſenger to *Antiochus*, with a Propoſal of Marriage, and a Tender of her Kingdom to him, as well as of her Perſon. *Antiochus* embraced the Propoſal; and upon cloſing with *Cleopatra* on thoſe Terms, the People came into him in ſuch Numbers, that in a ſhort Time he was at the Head of a conſiderable Army, made War upon *Tryphon*, overcame him in a Battle; and beating him out of *Syria*, purſued him to *Phenice*, beſetting him at laſt in *Dora*, a ſtrong and a well fortified Hold.

He ſent Ambaſſadors alſo to *Simon* the high Prieſt of the Jews, upon a Treaty of Alliance, who frankly accepted of his Terms, and ſoon after ſent him a Supply of Proviſions and Monies for the carrying on the Siege, which was a Service at that Time ſo acceptable to *Antiochus*, that he looked upon him as his beſt Friend; but *Tryphon* made his Eſcape out of *Dora*, and fled to *Apamia*, where the Town was

was taken, and himſelf ſlain, after he had held the Government three Years.

CHAP. V.

Treachery of Antiochus *and* Ptolemy, *towards* Simon, *who is murdered at the Inſtigation of the latter.* Hyrcanus *ſucceeds to the Pontificate. Glorious Reſolution of his Mother, who is at Length put to Death by* Ptolemy. Hyrcanus *faithfully eſpouſes the Cauſe of the Jews, makes ſeveral Alliances in their Favour. Various Fortunes of divers Eaſtern Princes.*

ANTIOCHUS being naturally covetous, and conſequently ungrateful, was ſo far from acknowledging the good Offices *Simon* had done him, that he ſent an Army under the Command of *Cendebeus*, to lay *Judea* waſte, and to ſeize upon his Perſon. This perfidious Indignity put the good old Man into ſuch a Rage, that forgetting the Infirmities of his Age, he marched immediately at the Head of an Army with the Reſolution of a Hero in the Prime of his Youth, to engage the Enemy; ſending his Son before him with ſome of his choiceſt Troops, and himſelf following with the Reſt, planting Ambuſhes up and down in his Avenues, and ordering all Things to his utmoſt Satisfaction.

When *Simon* had been eight Years Governor of *Judea*, he was treacherouſly murdered, by his Son-in-Law *Ptolemy*, upon an Invitation to an Entertainment. He had his Wife and two Sons already in his Cuſtody, and his Ruffians were diſpatched abroad to take his third Son *John*, otherwiſe called *Hyrcanus*, and kill him; but the young Man having Notice of the Danger, took Sanctuary in *Jeruſalem*, where the People treated him with the utmoſt Affection, partly for the Love and Veneration they had from the Memory of his Father, and partly from the Averſion they had to *Ptolemy*, whom they bravely repulſed upon an Attempt to enter at one Gate, becauſe they had already received *Hyrcanus* at another.

Upon this Indignity *Ptolemy* withdrew himſelf to a Caſtle not far from *Jerico*, called *Dagen*. *Hyrcanus* at the ſame Time entered upon the Pontificate, and officiated as Succeſſor to his Father. The firſt Thing he did upon his Entrance into that ſolemn Order, was to offer up Sacrifices and Praiſes in due Form; which Duty being over, he marched to the Aſſault of the Fort; where the only Difficulty he met with, was to ſupport the Effect of his Tenderneſs for his Mother and his Brethren, whom *Ptolemy* expoſed from the Top of the Wall, laſhing and tormenting them in the Sight of all the People, with Menaces to caſt them headlong from the Battlements, unleſs *Hyrcanus* immediately abandoned the Siege.

Hyrcanus judging at firſt that the ſlower he was in his Attack, the more Lenity *Ptolemy* would ſhew to his Relations, pauſed with himſelf

on

on his future Proceedings; but his Mother obſerving him deliberate and relent, called out to him aloud, and encouraged him both with her Hand and Voice, to make a right Uſe of that barbarous Spectacle, and without any Regard to her's and her Childrens Sufferings, to do himſelf and his Family Right, in a juſt Vengeance upon the Head of that execrable Monſter; for ſhe herſelf deſired nothing more than to expire in Torment, on Condition that that unnatural Tyrant might be puniſhed according his Deſert.

The amazing Bravery of this Woman determined *Hyrcanus* at all Events, to purſue his Reſolution; but obſerving that the more they preſſed upon the Fort, the fiercer *Ptolemy* was in his Tortures on his Mother. Reſentment and Revenge gave Way to the over-ruling Softneſs of a dutiful Son; ſo that through Irreſolution and Diſtraction, the Siege was protracted till the ſabbatical Year, (the ſeventh Year being a Year of Reſt to the Jews, as well as the Seventh of Days;) *Ptolemy* was now delivered from the War and the Siege; and thereupon putting to Death the Mother and the Brother of *Hyrcanus*, he withdrew to *Zeno*, ſirnamed *Cotyla*, a Tyrant who had at that Time uſurped the Government of *Philadelphia*.

Antiochus had not as yet forgotten or forgiven the Repulſes and Diſgraces he had formerly received from *Simon* the Father of *Hyrcanus*; ſo that he made an Inroad into *Judea* in the fourth Year of his Reign, when he ravaged the Country and drove *Hyrcanus* into the City, dividing his Army into ſeven Bodies round about it. They advanced but ſlowly at the Beginning, the Walls being very ſtrong, and the Place well defended.

The Camp was for ſome Time diſtreſſed for Water; but that Defect was plentifully ſupplied by a great Fall of Rain.

Upon a Review of the Place, they found it moſt acceſſible on the North Side, and therefore carried on their Attack principally upon that Quarter, raiſing a hundred Terrets of three Stories high, which were well lined with Soldiers to carry on the Siege. They had likewiſe drawn a Circumvallation of a great Length and Depth, to cut off all Communication. But this did not hinder the Defendants from making certain Sallies, when at any Time they ſaw the Beſiegers off their Guard; but if they found them in a Poſture to receive them, they would make their Retreat.

As there were many unſerviceable Perſons, who waſted the Proviſions; *Hyrcanus* ſeparated thoſe that were fit to bear Arms from the Reſt, and turned all the uſeleſs People out of the City; where, between *Antiochus* on the one Hand, that ſtopt them from going any further, and *Hyrcanus* on the other, that would not let them come in, many of the poor Wretches periſhed for Want of Bread.

It was now the Time of the Feaſt of Tabernacles; and upon this Feſtival, theſe miſerable Creatures were ad-

admitted into the Town; whereupon the Inhabitants addreſſed themſelves to *Antiochus*, only to grant a Truce for ſeven Days, in Honour of the Solemnity; which out of a Motive of Religion, he readily granted, and alſo ſent them magnificent Preſents for ſacrifices; as Bulls with gilded Horns, Cups of Gold and Silver, repleniſhed with precious Spices and Perfumes; and, in fine, treated them in a Manner much different from that of *Antiochus Epiphanes*; who, in affront to their Religion, upon the taking of the Temple, ſacrificed Hogs upon the Altar, and prophaned the holy Place with Swines Fleſh, in a Contempt of their Laws and Ceremonies, which proved the Cauſe of an irreconcileable Animoſity between them; whereas the preſent *Antiochus* had the Character and Sirname of Pious given him, in honour of the Reverence he had for Religon.

Hyrcanus took Encouragement upon this Inſtance of the King's Juſtice and Goodneſs, to move him by an Embaſſy on the Jews Behalf, for the Liberty only of living one with another, according to the Laws and Cuſtoms of their Country. The Court Faction, on the contrary, were for having them wholly cut off, as an inſociable Sort of People, that would be thought holier and wiſer than their Neighbours, and valued themſelves upon Singularity from the Reſt of the World, in their Lives and Manners. But the King had too great a Reſpect to their Piety, to put them to Extremities; ſo that he ſent Word back to *Hyrcanus*, that upon Condition the beſieged would deliver up their Army, undertake for the Taxes of *Joppa*, and the Reſt of the Cities about *Judea*, and receive a Garriſon into the Town, of his Appointment; he was ready to put an End to the War.

The Jews agreed to every Article, but the receiving of the Garriſon, out of a Regard to the Scruple they made of intermixing with ſtrangers; but to be eaſed of that Article, they propoſed rather to give the King Hoſtages for the Performances of Covenants, and five hundred Talents over and above, which were accepted; three hundred of them being paid down upon in Part; and the Brother of *Hyrcanus* becoming one of the Pledges. Upon the finiſhing of this Treaty, the Works and the Battlements were thrown down, the City diſmantled, and the Siege raiſed.

Hyrcanus, after this, cauſed the Monument of *David* to be opened, where he took three thouſand Talents to his own Uſe, and furniſhed himſelf with foreign Mercenaries, being the firſt of the Nation that ever entertained an Army of Strangers.

He then entered into a League with *Antiochus*, invited him and his Army into the City, where he gave them a ſplendid and magnificent Reception, and followed him afterward with his Auxiliaries into the Parthian War, as we have it upon the Authority of *Nicolaus Damacenus*.

Antiochus at length came to Battle with *Arſaces*, King of the Parthians, in which Action he loſt both his Life and his Army.

His Brother *Demetrius*, ſucceeded to the Kingdom of *Syria*, being ſet at Liberty by *Arſaces*, upon this Invaſion of *Antiochus*.

Hyrcanus, after the Death of *Antiochus*, marched with his Army into *Syria*, (as afterward it proved) that he ſhould find the Country in ſome Meaſure deſerted.

In ſix Months, with ſome Difficulty, he took *Medaba*, *Samega*, and other Places thereabout; and afterwards *Sichem* and *Garizin*, with the Land of the *Chuthites*, where the Temple ſtood, that with *Alexander*'s Permiſſion, was built after the Model of that at *Jeruſalem* by *Sanballat*, one of his Governors, to gratify his Son in Law *Manaſſes*, the Brother of the High Prieſt *Jaddus*, which Temple was deſtroyed about two hundred Years after.

Hyrcanus alſo took ſeveral Places in *Idumea*, as *Adora* and *Mariſſa*; and at laſt, when he had ſubdued the whole Province, made Proclamation for all People to depart the Land that would not ſubmit to be circumciſed. So rather than quit their Country, they not only comply'd in the Point of Circumciſion, but alſo to all the other Rites and Ceremonies of the Jews.

Hyrcanus, the High Prieſt, being now about to renew a League with the Romans, ſent his Embaſſadors to the Senate, with Letters upon that Subject. Theſe Letters being read and debated, an Alliance was concluded upon the following Conditions.

Fanius, *the Son of* Marcus Prætor, *called a Senate in the Field of* Mars, *on the eighth Day of the Ides of* February; *preſent* Lucius Manlius, *and* Caius Semporinus, *upon the Buſineſs of the Embaſſy of* Simon; Apollonius, *and* Diodorus, *Perſons of Honour and Probity, and deputed by the Nation of the* Jews *to treat about an Alliance, and other public Matters with the Senate of Rome.*

Whereupon it was agreed that Joppa, *and the Ports of* Gazara *with the Fountains, and other Places that had been taken away by* Antiochus *contrary to a Degree of the Senate, ſhould be all reſtored, and the King's Soldiers not permitted to paſs through either that, or any other Part of the Roman Territory, without Leave.*

That whatever had been done by Antiochus *in the late War, ſhould be declared void, and Commiſſioners appointed to take an eſtimate of what the People had ſuffered in their lands and Goods by his Depredations; and to ſee Reparation made for all Loſſes.*

Upon theſe Conditions, the Senate was pleaſed to accept of the Propoſals, that were preſented them by theſe honourable Perſons, in the Name of their good Friends and Allies, the People of the Jews.

Fanius had Orders likewiſe to furniſh the Ambaſſadors with Money to defray their Charges back, out of the public Stock; this he accordingly did, with recommendatory Letters, to all Governors and Officers in their Way, for the Convenience and Security of their Paſſage.

The

The Succeſs of *Hyrcanus* did not fail to excite the Envy of *Demetrius*, who would willingly have come to an open Rupture with him, could he formed a proper Alliance; but the Syrians, and his own Soldiers, hated him to that Degree, for his Lewdneſs, that they joined in a Confederacy againſt him, requeſting to *Ptolemy*, King of *Egypt*, to ſend them ſome Branch of *Seleucus*'s Family, and they would make him King.

Upon this Application, *Ptolemy* ſent them one *Alexander*, ſirnamed *Zebin*, with a conſiderable Body of Men. An Engagement enſued, and *Demetrius* being routed, he fled to his Wife *Cleopatra*, who was then at *Ptolemais*, for Protection; but the Gates being ſhut againſt him, he fled to *Tyre*, where he fell into the Hands of his Enemies, who kept him a While in Anguiſh, and then put him to Death.

Alexander Zebina, being now poſſeſſed of the Kingdom of *Syria*, entered into a League with *Hyrcanus* the High Prieſt, who was engaged ſome Time after in a War with *Antiochus Gryphus*, the Son of *Demetrius*. It came to a Battle, and *Alexander* was ſlain in the Engagement.

Antiochus by this Means came to be King of *Syria*; but durſt not as yet make any Attempt upon the Jews, for he heard that *Antiochus Cyzicenus* was at that Time levying an Army againſt him in the Town of *Cyzicus*. Wherefore, without attempting any Thing againſt the Jews, he thought it moſt adviſeable to keep himſelf upon his Guard againſt his Brother, who was called *Cyzicenus*, from the Name of the Place where he received his Education.

Upon the coming of *Antiochus Cyzicenus* into *Syria*, the Brethren were perpetually at War, and *Hyrcanus* conſequently in Poſſeſſion of a profound Peace; for, after the Slaughter of *Antiochus*, he fell off from the Macedonians, and had no more Concern with them, either as an Ally, or Subject.

In the Days of *Alexander Zebina*, Affairs proſpered with *Hyrcanus* according to his utmoſt Deſire, and alſo in the Reign of the two Brothers: for, while they were haraſſing one another, he enjoyed the Revenues of *Judea*, whereby he amaſſed an inſtimable Treaſure; for while *Cyzicenus*, ravaged the Country, on the one hand, and his Brother had no Relief out of *Egypt* on the other, he left them to themſelves to confound one another, wnich tended ultimately to the Eſtabliſhment of his Proſperity.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Hyrcanus *inveſts* Samaria, *which is afflicted by dreadful Famine. Various Fortunes of* Hyrcanus *and* Antiochus, *who wage War againſt each other. Death of* Antiochus. *Deſtruction of* Samaria. Hyrcanus *eſpouſes the Part of the Sect of Sadduces. Pays the Debt of Nature. Is ſucceeded by* Antiochus, *who changes the* Jewiſh *Government, and evinces a very preverſe and impious Diſpoſition. Is chaſtiſed by a very ſore Judgment; and, before his Death, confeſſes his iniquitous Conduct.*

HYRCANUS, under theſe Circumſtances marched with an Army to the ſtrong City of *Samaria*; being ſo irritated againſt them by the Indignities they had put upon the People of *Mariſſa*, who were Inhabitants and Allies of *Judea*, though ſubjected to the King of *Syria*, that he reſolved to attack the Place with all his Vigour.

Upon ſitting down before it, he ſurrounded the town with a large Ditch, and a double Wall of eighty Furlong's Compaſs, and gave the Conduct of the Siege to his Sons *Antigonus* and *Ariſtobulus*, who carried it on with ſuch Vigour, and kept them in ſo cloſe, that they were forced to the Extremity of eating Carrion: ſo that in the end they implored the Aſſiſtance of *Antiochus Cyzicenus*, who came immediately; but being routed by *Ariſtobulus*, and purſued by him and his Brother, as far as *Scythopolis*, with ſome Loſs, eſcaped.

The Brethren, after this Action, returned, and forcing the People into the Town again, renewed the Siege. which produced a repeated Application to the ſame *Antiochus* for Succour, who prevailed with *Ptolemy Lathurus* for ſix thouſand Men; but the Aſſiſtance was granted ſo much againſt his Mother's Approbation, that he had well nigh cauſed the Loſs of his Kingdom.

With this Band of Egyptians, *Antiochus* at firſt ravaged the Country of *Hyrcanus*, not being at that Time in a Condition to ſuſtain his Inroads. His Deſign was, by this Diverſion, to draw him from the Siege; but thro' Surprizes, Deſertions, and other Caſualties, he found his Party in a ſhort Time ſo weakened that he committed the Charge of the Jewiſh War to *Callimunder* and *Epicrates*, and went off from thence himſelf to *Tripoli*.

Callimunder, after this, with more Bravery than Diſcretion, ventured upon a raſh Encounter, where his People where wholly cut off, and himſelf ſlain. *Epicrates*, at the ſame Time, treacherouſly betrayed *Scythopolis*, and ſeveral other neighbouring Towns, to the Jews, that there was no Poſſibility of relieving the Place.

Hyrcanus had been a full Year before *Samaria* when he took it; nor was he content with reducing the City, without razing the Foundations; for he not only made it a Heap of Rubbiſh, but drew ſeveral Trenches of

of Water through it, which ſo diſfigured the Face of every thing, that there was not the leaſt Mark left of any Building.

The Jews proſpered at this Juncture, not only at *Jeruſalem*, but at *Alexandria* alſo, and the reſt of *Egypt*, *Cyprus*, &c. For the Queen *Cleopatra*, upon a Difference with her Son *Ptolemy Lathur*, committed the Command of her Troops to *Chelcias* and *Ananias*, the Sons of that *Onias* who erected a Temple in the Territory of *Heliopolis*, after the Platform of that of *Jeruſalem*.

Theſe two Perſons were the Queen's Directors in all ſhe did, according to the Teſtimony of *Strabo* the *Cappidocian*, who writes, to the following Effect.

That many of thoſe that either came formerly with them to Cyprus, *or were ſent thither afterward by* Cleopatra, *immediately quitted the Queen's Intereſt, and went over to* Ptolemy; *only the Jews that were of* Onias's *Party, ſtood firm, out of a Reverence they paid the Queen for the Reſpect he ſhewed to* Chelcias *and* Ananias, *their Friends and Countrymen.*

The Succeſs of *Hyrcanus* drew upon him the Envy of the Jews, and eſpecially the Phariſees, who retained no extraordinary Eſteem for him before. The Authority of that Faction, was ſo ſacred among the common People, that let them treat their King or their High Prieſt, with the utmoſt Indignity, the Multitude would approve their Proceedings.

Hyrcanus, however, having been trained up in that School, and looked upon as a Perſon much in their Favour, took Occaſion to invite them to an Entertainment, where he treated them with all poſſible Reſpect. As ſoon as their Spirits were raiſed by good cheers he addreſſed them in the following Manner.

I need not tell you my worthy Friends that a Man of your own Principles deſireth nothing more than to approve himſelf acceptable to God, and juſt to his Neighbour, which is but according to your own Doctrine; but if you ſhall find, that I have in any thing departed from my Duty, as it is your Part to admoniſh and inſtruct me, ſhall account it mine to amend and reform.

This candid Addreſs was received with ſuch Applauſe, that *Hyrcanus* did not a little value himſelf upon the Reputation he acquired thereby.

After a ſhort Pauſe, *Eleazer*, one of the Gueſts, a malicious Man, ſtood up, and thus addreſſed himſelf to *Hyrcanus*.

Since you are pleaſed to profeſs yourſelf ſo great a Lover of Truth and plain dealing, be ſo juſt alſo as to lay down your Pontificate, and content yourſelf with your civil Adminiſtration.

When he was demanded the Cauſe of this Propoſal? He reply'd *Becauſe we have been told by our Elders, that in the Days of* Antiochus Epiphanes, *your Mother was a Slave.*

The Report was falſe, and ſo much the more offenſive, as well to the Phariſees, as to *Hyrcanus* himſelf.

There happened to be in the Company, one *Jonathan*, *Hyrcanus's* particular

ticular Friend, but a Sadducee, and conſequently a mortal Enemy to the Phariſees. He inſiſted that the Calumny of *Eleazer* was concerted, and that the Phariſees were privy to it; adding, that the ſame would appear, if *Hyrcanus* would refer to them what Puniſhment they thought a Man might deſerve for ſo ſcandalous a Defamation.

Hyrcanus put the Queſtion, to try how they ſtood affected; and whether or not they were privy to the Affront. Their Anſwer was (being men generally inclined to Mercy in ſuch Caſes) That they did not find Defamation to be a capital Crime, and therefore deemed Whipping and Impriſonment might ſerve for Satisfaction.

This Method of compromiſing the Affair put *Hyrcanus* into a violent Paſſion, and gave him to underſtand, that they had every one of them part in this infamous Reflection upon his Family. *Jonathan*, in this Heat, embittered him againſt the Phariſees to ſuch a Decree, that he abſolutely renounced the Sect, and went over to the Sadducees; abrogating all their Ordinances and Conſtitutions, with a Penalty upon thoſe who ſhould preſume to obſerve them. This was it that put both himſelf and his Sons quite out of Credit with the common People, as it will be ſeen hereafter.

The Remainder of *Hyrcanus*'s Life, after the quelling this Sedition, was Death, which happened in the Year of his Government thirty one.

He left behind him five Sons, and God was pleaſed to honour him with three eminent Dignities; the Civil Government of the Jews, the Prieſthood, and the Spirit of Prophecy, foretelling, by a divine Revelation, that his two eldeſt Sons ſhould not long enjoy the Government after the Death of their Father, and its ſucceeding in the Event.

On *Hyrcanus*'s deceaſe, his eldeſt Son *Ariſtobulus* formed a Reſolution of new modelling the Government, and changing the Principality into an abſolute Monarchy, ſetting the Crown accordingly upon his own Head. This happened four hundred and eighty one Years and three Months after the Return of the Jews from the Captivity of *Babylon*.

He had ſo great a Regard for *Antigonus*, his next Brother, that he aſſociated him as a kind of a Partner with him in the Government. The other three he kept in Priſon, together with his Mother, whom he looked upon as a Rival, upon a Pretence, that his Father had left her at his Death in Poſſeſſion of all he could confer upon her. So horrid and unnatural was his Cruelty, that he ſtarved his Mother to Death, and afterward, put his beloved Brother to death, only upon wicked Suggeſtions of malicious Tongues.

Theſe Inſinuations had no Effect upon him at firſt, through the Prevalence of his Affection for *Antigonus*, and a Perſuaſion that they were the Dictates of Malice and Envy; but happening to return from the Army, on a certain Occaſion, in great Pomp, juſt

juſt upon the Solemnity of the Feaſt of Tabernacles, *Ariſtobulus* at the ſame Time lying Sick, his Brother went up to the Temple, with his Guards about him, in great Splendor, upon the Buſineſs of religious Worſhip in order to offer up his Prayers and Vows for the Health of his Brother.

The Fame of *Antigonus* and the Magnificence of his Retinue, furniſhed Matter for a Faction of Sycophants and Court Paraſites to work upon; ſo they went immediately to the King, with all the moſt virulent Calumnies, ſaying.

This was not a Behaviour that became the Condition of a private Man, but rather a moſt notorious Evidence of a Deſign upon the Crown; intimating that the Guards he had then about him, would in a ſhort Time produce, from this Invaſion upon his Royalty, to a Violence upon his Perſon; nor would he be ſo impolitic as to ſtop at part of the Government, when he might obtain the whole.

Ariſtobulus was ſo divided between the Fear of being too ſecure, or too credulous, that though he could not believe every thing they told him, yet at the ſame Time, ſuſpected that it was founded on ſome juſt Ground; and therefore reſolved to provide for his Safety, without giving any Proof of jealouſy.

In his Apartment in a Tower, ſince known by the Name of *Antonia*, he poſted a Guard in a dark Place under-ground, with a particular Orders, that they ſhould watch his Brother in his Paſſage, and that if he came without Arms, he ſhould paſs unmoleſted; but if he came armed they ſhould kill him.

Ariſtobulus then ſent for his Brother to come to him, charging the Meſſenger to bid him come unarmed; but the Queen, and the reſt of the Conſpirators, tampered with the Meſſenger, and bad him tell *Antigonus* on the contrary, that his Brother had heard of a very elegant Suit of Armour he had, and that he was deſirous of ſeeing how it became him. As he depended upon the good Faith of his Brother, and ſuſpected no Treachery, went immediately armed, juſt as the Meſſenger found him. Upon his coming to the Tower of *Straton*, the Soldiers fell upon him in a dark Paſſage and ſlew him.

This Diſaſter may ſuffice to ſhew the Force of Envy and Slander; and how the very beſt Diſpoſitions may be corrupted by thoſe Temptations.

But the moſt extraordinary Circumſtance was the Prediction of one *Judas*, a famous Prophet of thoſe Times. This *Judas*, upon the ſight of *Antigonus*, coming to the Temple, broke out into Exclamations among his Diſciples, that he was now weary of his Life; for that *Antigonus*, whoſe Death he had preſag'd upon that very Day at *Straton*'s Tower, was yet alive; the Place ſix hundred furlongs off, and the Day more than half ſpent? ſo that he had utterly loſt the Credit of a Prophet for ever. While he was in this perplexity the news arrived of *Antigonus's* be-

being ſlain in a ſubterranean Paſſage under the Tower. *

The conſcious Guilt of being acceſſary to his Brother's death, inflam'd his Diſtemper to that Degree, that is brought on a vomiting of Blood; and as one of his Servants was carrying Part of it away in a Baſon, he ſtumbled upon the way, and ſpilt it upon the very Blood of his Maſter's Brother.

This Accident cauſed ſuch an Outcry, that *Ariſtobulus* overhearing it, could not reſt till they told him the Meaning of it; and the more unwilling they were of owning the Truth, the more eager was he to know it, as men are naturally more curious in ſuch Caſes. At length through Importunity and Menance, he extorted it from them, and in the Horrors of Conſcience thus expoſtulated with Groans and Tears.

The all-ſeeing Eye of God hath found me out in my Wickedneſs, and my Brother's Blood hath already brought down a Vengeance upon me. How long ſhall this ſhameleſs Carcaſe maintain a Life ſo juſtly forfeited to the Aſhes of my dear Mother and Brother! Why do I not rather die once for all, than bleed to Death thus Drop by Drop, as if my Sufferings could be an Atonement for the Guilt of Parricide! He had no ſooner uttered theſe Words than he gave up the Ghoſt, having govern'd only one Year, under the Surname *Philellen*; that is to ſay, A Lover of the *Greeks*.

He gained many Advantages to his Country; made Way upon *Iturea*, and joined a conſiderable Part of it to the Territory of *Judea*, forcing the People, upon Pain of Baniſhment, to ſubmit to Circumciſion, and live in a Conformity to the other Rites and Practices of the *Jews*.

He was accounted otherwiſe a Perſon of Modeſty and Juſtice, as *Strabo* vouches for him, in theſe Words.

He was a righteous Man, and in many Reſpects a Friend to the Jews; *for he enlarged their Juriſdiction by annexing to it* Iturea, *uniting the People alſo into one common Bond of Circumciſion.*

CHAP. VII.

Salome *releaſes the Brothers impriſoned by* Ariſtobulus, *and Places the Elder upon the Throne; who puts one of his Brothers to Death. Divers Conteſts between* Alexander *and* Ptolemy *with various Succeſs.* Cleopatra *eſpouſes the Cauſe of the* Jews, *with great ſucceſs, and after the Death of* Ptolemy *enters into Alliance with* Alexander. *Horrid Maſſacre by the Jews.* Alexander *after various fortunes falls in an Ambuſh. A Rebellion enſues that proved very fatal to the* Jews.

* This was call'd *Straton*'s Tower, as well as that upon the Coaſt, which was afterwards known by the Name of *Ceſarea*; and this ſet the Prophet right again.

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AFTER the Death *Ariſtobulus*, his Wife *Salome*, (by the *Greeks* called *Alexandria*) ſet the Brothers at liberty, whom her Husband had made Priſoners, and placed *Janneus*, otherwiſe called *Alexander*, upon the Throne; the Eldeſt, and the moſt moderate of three.

Alexander therefore, upon the Death of *Ariſtobulus*, enter'd upon the Adminſtration; and taking off one of his Brothers that would have ſupplanted him, provided for the other in the humble ſtate of a private Life.

As ſoon as he had ſettled the State, he marched with an Army to *Ptolemais*, where he encounter'd a Body of the Enemy in the Field; beat them into the Town, and then ſhut them up in it. There was only this Place and *Gaza*, of all the Sea-coaſt Towns that ſtood out, beſides *Dora*, and the Tower of *Straton*, in the Hands of *Zoilus*.

As ~~the~~ to *Antiochus Philometor*, and his Brother *Antiochus Cyzicenus*, they were ſo engaged and waged in a War one with another, that their was no hope of any Relief to the People of *Ptolemais* from them.

The beſieged, in fine, had no Proſpect of Relief, but from *Egypt*, and eſpecially from *Ptolemy Lathur*, who had been driven out of his Kingdom by his Mother *Cleopatra*, and was now withdrawn into *Cyprus*: ſo that they ſent Ambaſſadors to *Ptolomy* to deſire his Aid againſt *Alexander*; not doubting, but that as ſoon as he ſhould ſet Foot in *Syria*, the People of *Gaza*, and *Ptolemais* would all declare in his Favour; beſide that, *Zoilus*, the *Sidonians*, and other People in thoſe Parts would certainly join him.

The King was ſo elevated with theſe Aſſurances, that he ſet his People immediately upon equipping of a Fleet for the Expedition: but while they were thus employed, one *Demetrius*, a Perſon of great Credit with the Citizens of *Ptolemais*, brought the People, to a better Underſtanding of the Matter, by reaſoning with them about it after this Manner.

The important Point is this, whether you had not better ſtand to the Fate of the War you are engag'd in with the Jews, *and Venture to uncertain Iſſue of it, than by calling in and delivering yourſelves up to the Protection of a Foreign Power, incur a certain Slavery; and not only become involved in a preſent broil, but run the Riſque of a more dangerous Incumbrance that threatens you from* Egypt; *for you cannot think that* Cleopatra *will remain inactive and ſee* Ptolemy *form his Troops; the Queen will rather get beforehand with him, and have a potent Army at his back, before he is ready for it; beſides the Hazard he runs of being driven out of* Cyprus.

Beſides if Ptolemy *ſhould fail in his Deſign, and be forced back to* Cyprus, *you will be expoſed to the greateſt Dangers and Difficulties.*

This Remonſtrance diſſuaded them from their Deſign of the Embaſſy, and *Ptolemy* was informed of the ſame upon his Paſſage; however, ſince he was in Motion, he continu'd his Courſe to *Sycamin*, where he landed an army of about thirty thouſand

Horſe and Foot, marching thence to *Ptolemais*, with an intent to ſend an Embaſſy to the City; but when he found that they would neither regard his Meſſage, nor perſonal Application, it greatly perplexed him, and while he was involved in this Dilemma, *Zoilus* and ſome Deputies from *Gaza* arrived, to implore his Aſſiſtance againſt the Jews and *Alexander*, that were making Havock in their Country.

Alexander, upon this, was forced to raiſe the Siege: And when he found that nothing was to be effected by Force, he had Recourſe to Stratagem. He privately treated with *Cleopatra* againſt *Ptolemy*, and at the ſame Time kept fair with *Ptolemy*, under the Countenance of a Friend and an Ally; propoſing to give him four hundred Talents of Silver, upon Condition of delivering up the Uſurper *Zoilus* into his Hands, and reſtoring to the Jews their Lands which he had in Poſſeſſion.

Ptolemy, without Heſitation, embraced the Friendſhip of *Alexander*, and ſeized upon *Zoilus*; but being informed, that there was an Intrigue carried on between *Alexander* and *Cleopatra*, he looked upon the League as violated, and laid Siege to *Ptolemais*, where the Gates were ſhut againſt him. Upon this he divided his Army, leaving one Part of it before the Town to carry on the Siege, and marching off with the Remainder of it himſelf, to deſtroy the Comtry of *Judea*.

Alexander, on the other Hand, to recounter this Deſign of *Ptolemy*, levied a formidable Army of his own People; and advanced with it againſt the Enemy. *Ptolemy*, in the mean Time taking the Advantage of a Sabbath Day, fell upon *Aſochis*, a City of *Galilee*, and took it by Aſſault with about ten thouſand Priſoners, and a vaſt Booty.

After the taking of *Aſochius*, *Ptolemy* attacked *Sepphoris*, an adjacent Place, where he was repulſed with a conſiderable Loſs, and from thence marched directly to hazard an Engagement with *Alexander*, whom he found near the River *Jordan*, and encamped over-againſt the Enemy. *Alexander* had in his Van eight thouſand of thoſe they call Hacatontomachi, armed with brazen Bucklers, and *Ptolemy*'s Men in the Front had the ſame Sort of Shields; but the Generality of his People not being ſo well armed as their Adverſaries, were not very deſirous of engaging, till one *Philoſtephanus*, a gallant and experienced Officer who had the Conduct of them, led them on and encouraged them to ſuſtain the Encounter. The firſt Word of Command was to paſs the River that parted the two Armies; which *Alexander* did not oppoſe, in Confidence of obtaining the Victory, if he could but engage the Enemy with the River behind them to cut off their Retreat. When it came to the Point, the Fortune of the Battle was doubtful, and it was maintained with great Loſs on both Sides; till ſome Time, one of *Ptolemy's* Diviſions giving Way, the Victory ſeemed to incline to *Alexander*: But *Philoſtephanus* coming up

to

to their Relief with a ſeaſonable Reinforcement, that Wing of the Jews was overpowered by Numbers, and broken; and no Succour appearing, they were forced to Flight, and the whole Field followed their Example; *Ptolemy's* Men purſuing them with great Slaughter.

According to ſome Hiſtorians, *Alexander* loſt in this Battle and Purſuit, no leſs than fifty thouſand Men.

After this bloody Victory, *Ptolemy*, in the Evening, went into ſome of the Jew's Villages and Habitations, and finding them crowded with Women and Children, ordered his Soldiers to cut their Throats, promiſcuouſly, and hew them into Quarters, and boil them, as a Terror to thoſe that eſcaped from the Battle, when they ſhould find themſelves fallen into the Hands of an Enemy that lived upon human Fleſh.

Cleopatra, alarmed at the growing Power of her Son, who had reduced *Gaza*, and laid Waſte the Land of *Judea*, thought it neceſſary to curb his Ambition, eſpecially as he was come to the Gates of *Egypt*, with a Deſign upon the Kingdom. Therefore ſhe muſtered, without Delay, her utmoſt Force, Naval and Military, conſtituting *Chelcias* and *Ananias*, two Jews, Generals.

She ſent the greateſt Part of her Treaſure, with her Grand-children, and her laſt Will and Teſtament into the Iſle of *Coas*; and ordered her Son *Alexander* with a powerful Army into *Phenice*, to keep that Province in Obedience, while ſhe herſelf went to *Ptolemais*; and being refuſed Admittance, ordered an Aſſault to be made upon the Town. *Ptolemy*, upon this, quitted *Syria*, and haſtened away into *Egypt*, flattering himſelf, that his unexpected Arrival in the Queen's Abſence, would tend to his Succeſs; but *Cleopatra* was prepared for him, though ſhe had the Misfortune at this Time to loſe *Chelcias*, one of her Generals, as he was in the Purſuit of *Ptolemy* in *Celo-Syria*.

Upon *Ptolemy's* Miſcarriage in this attempt upon *Egypt*, the Queen ſent a ſtrong Detachment after him, that drove him quite out of his Country, a ſecond Time, and forced him to take up his Winter-Quarters in *Geza*. She herſelf, in the mean Time, taking the City and Garriſon of *Ptolemais* by Aſſault, where complimentary Honours mutually paſſed between the Queen and *Alexander*, and *Cleopatra* was particularly ſaluted for her generous Aſſiſtance of an unfortunate Prince under the Perſecution and Oppreſſion of a common Enemy.

Some of the Queen's Friends purſuaded her to purſue different Meaſures, ſuggeſting to her, the Expediency of availing herſelf of this Opportunity to ſeize *Alexander*, as it was highly impolitic to leave ſuch a Number of Jews under the Command of one Man. But *Ananias* loudly exclaimed againſt the Unreaſonableneſs of ſuch a Proceeding, as highly injurious to all the Ties of Hoſpitality and common Faith; eſpecially to a Friend and a Kinſman, under ſo

ſacred

ſacred a Truſt; alledging moreover, that one ſuch Act of Injuſtice would turn againſt her the Hearts of all honeſt *Jews* upon the Face of the Earth. The Queen was ſo pleaſed with the honeſt Simplicity of *Ananias*, that ſhe did not only treat *Alexander* with Lenity, but renew'd a League of Friendſhip with him, at *Scythopolis*, a City of *Celo-Syria*.

No ſooner was *Alexander* from the Power of *Ptolemy*, than he undertook an Expedition into *Celo-Syria*; where, after a Siege of ten Months, he took *Gadara*, and after that, *Amathus* the ſtrongeſt Fort upon the River *Jordan*, and the Place where *Theodorus* the Son of *Zoon*, in an Outrage of Revenge, fell upon the *Jews* by Surprize, cut off ten thouſand of their Men, and took *Alexander*'s Baggage: but this unexpected Diſaſter did not divert the King from his Deſign upon *Raphia*, a Sea-coaſt Town, and *Anthedon*, which was afterwards by *Herod*, called *Agrippiades*; both which he reduced by Force.

Ptolemy had by this Time left *Gaza*, and betaken himſelf into *Cyprus*, his Mother *Cleopatra* alſo being returned to *Egypt*, ſo that *Alexander* took this Occaſion of revenging himſelf upon the People of *Gaza* for calling in *Ptolemy* to their Succour againſt him; laid Siege to the Town, and at the ſame Time ravaged their Country.

While *Alexander* was before the Place, *Apollodotus* their Commander made a reſolute Sally in the Night with two thouſand Mercenaries, and ten thouſand of the Citizens well armed, upon the Camp of the Jews; and as long as it was dark, the beſieged had Succeſs, upon an Apprehenſion of *Ptolemy*'s being come up with Relief; but no ſooner did the Day break than the Jews rallied, and ſo furiouſly charged the Garriſon, that they deſtroyed a thouſand of their Men; But the Courage of theſe People was Proof ſtill againſt all the Difficulties of Number, Force, nay, Famine itſelf; being reſolved rather to abide all Extremities, than ſhrink, or yield to an Enemy.

And as a further Encouragement, they were animated by *Aretas* an Arabian King, with the Promiſe of a timely Succour. But all this availed nothing, for before any Supply could be brought, *Apollodotus* was killed, and the Town taken. This *Apollodotus* was murdered by *Lyſimachus*, his own Brother, from an ignoble Motive of Envy for the Repuration he had gained among the People.

After the Fact, he aſſembled a Party, and delivered up the City to *Alexander*. This Prince, upon his firſt Entrance, behaved himſelf with Moderation; but this Diſpoſition did not long prevail, for ſoon after he permitted his Soldiers to kill, burn, and deſtroy at Pleaſure. This Licence they extended in an abſolute Maſſacre, though it coſt them dear enough; for there died as many of the Jews, as of the Townſmen.

Some, to anticipate the Fury of the Enemy, ſet Fire to their own Houſes, others laid violent Hands upon their very Wives and Children, chuſing

chuſing rather to have them die free, than live Slaves.

The Magiſtracy happen'd to be in Council when theſe barbarous Troops came in the City, and the Senators, to the Number of five hundred, fled immediately to the Temple of *Apollo* for Sanctuary; but they were all ſlaughtered to a Man, the Town ſack'd and levell'd; and *Alexander*, after a Year ſpent before it, returned to *Jeruſalem*.

While *Antiochus Cyzicenus* was in Poſſeſſion of the Government of *Syria*, there was another *Antiochus*, the Brother of *Seleucus*, who made War upon him, wherein he loſt his Life and his Army; after which his Brother *Philip* took the Crown to himſelf, and govern'd Part of *Syria*. *Ptolemy Lathur* upon this ſent for his fourth Brother *Demetrius Eucerus* to *Gnidus*, whom he conſtituted King of *Damaſcus*, *Antiochus*, for the Time he lived, made a ſtout Reſiſtance againſt his Brothers; but being called ſoon after to the Aſſiſtance of *Laodice*, the Queen of the *Galadenes*, who was then in War with the *Parthians*, he was ſlain in the Field with his Sword in his Hand, behaving himſelf like a Man of Honour and Reſolution; and after his Death the Government of *Syria* deſcended to his two Brothers, *Philip* and *Demetrius*.

About this Time there broke out a Rebellion, which continued ſix Years, and coſt the Jews no leſs than fifty thouſand Lives.

The King was weary of the War, ſought for a Reconciliation, but could not affect it; and ſuch was the Averſion of the People to his Government, that when he required of them what he ſhould do to appeaſe them, they unanimouſly deſired him to cut his own Throat; and thereupon invited *Demetrius Eucerus* to their Aid.

CHAP. VII.

Various Conteſts between Demetrius *and* Alexander. *Horrible Inſtance of Cruelty in the latter. Death of* Demetrius *and* Alexander. *Lamentation of his Queen. State of* Judea *under her Government. Sect of the Phariſees rule in her Name. Divers Tranſactions between* Alexandra *and other Perſons.* Ariſtobulus, *her Son, endeavours to ſupplant her. Her Death and Character.*

Demetrius Eucerus, in Conjunction with thoſe who invited him marched to their Aſſiſtance with an Army of three thouſand Horſe, and forty thouſand Foot, and encamped near *Sichem*, where *Alexander*, with about ſix thouſand and two hundred foreign Mercenaries, and twenty thouſand of his own Faction, went out to meet him.

The Armies being drawn up, a bloody Battle enſued, in which *Demetrius* obtained the Victory, ſo that *Alexander* was forced to fly to the Mountains for Refuge; where, by a ſtrange Turn of Compaſſion for his Misfortune, ſix thouſand Jews came up and joined him.

Demetrius, alarmed at this ſudden Reinforcement, withdrew his Army and retired; but the Jews maintained their Ground, and carried on the War againſt *Alexander*, by Dint of their own Reſolution and Credit; notwithſtanding they were perpetually baffled and cut to Pieces whenever they engaged.

They were compelled at length with the beſt of their Men to betake themſelves to *Bethama* for Protection, where *Alexander* ſhut them up; and taking the Town, carried the People Priſoners to *Jeruſalem*, where he committed the moſt execrable Barbarities.

As he was feaſting with his Concubines, in a Turret that commanded a large Proſpect, he made it part of his Entertainment, to treat his Company with the Spectacle of hanging eight hundred Jews, with their Wives and Children, and cutting the Throats of each other while living.

This Barbarity rendered *Alexander* ſo deteſtable, that the Jews gave him the Appellation of * *Thracidas*. There were about eight thouſand of the Army that eſcaped by Night, and ſpent their Days afterward in a Kind of Baniſhment, during his Life.

Demetrius having advanced to *Berea*, and laid Siege to that Place, was ſo powerfully oppoſed, that he was compelled to ſurrender, and afterward ſent to *Mithridates*, the King of *Parthia*, who treated him with great Reſpect, till the Time of his Death, which happened ſhortly after his late Defeat.

Alexander addicted himſelf toward the End of his Reign to Intemperance and Debauchery of every Kind, which brought on a quartan Ague that continued three Years; but at the ſame Time he attended to the Offices of State, inſomuch that through the Preſſure of his Diſorder, and the Fatigue of Government, he expired at the Cloſe of that Term, upon the Frontiers of the Geraſens, at the Siege of the Caſtle of *Ragaba*, on the farther Side of the River *Jordan*.

When Queen *Alexandra* found him reduced to the laſt Extremity, ſhe lamented the Fate of herſelf and Children in Terms to this Effect.

Alas! my dear Lord, what will become of your Wife and Children, without one Friend in the World, and left expoſed to your mortal Enemis.

Alexander, in Conſequence of this Lamentation, thus adviſed her.

If you would be ſafe and happy when I am dead, and quietly ſucceed to the Government, follow my Counſel.

In the firſt Place, keep my Death concealed from the Soldiers, till the Caſtle is taken, and then triumphantly go to Jeruſalem *with the News of it. Make your Court to the Phariſees; for your Character will riſe or fall, according to their Opinion of you. I ſpeak this by Experience; for it has*

* Becauſe the Thracians were remarkably cruel and bloody in their natural Diſpoſitions, as appears from Thucydides and many other Hiſtorians.

been

been my Moroſneſs toward this Sect, that has turned the Hearts of the whole Nation againſt me. Therefore when you come to Jeruſalem, *ſend for ſome of the leading Men of that Sect, and lay before them, that out of the Reverence you have for the Generoſity, Piety, and Juſtice, you do now deliver up the Body to be diſpoſed of as to their Wiſdom ſhall ſeem meet; aſſuring them that you ſhall ever reſign yourſelf to their Authority, not only in this, but in all other Matters of a public Nature.*

Follow theſe Meaſures, and depend upon it there will be a Care taken for an honourable and magnificent Funeral, and for the Settling of yourſelf and Children in the Exerciſe of your lawful Power.

Let them have the Rule over you, and it will be their Concern to eſtabliſh you in a peacable Rule over others.

As ſoon as he had given this Advice to his Wife he expired, in the nine and fortieth Year of his Age, and the twenty ſeventh of his Reign.

As ſoon as the Caſtle was taken, *Alexandra* applied herſelf to the Phariſees, according to her Huſband's Directions, leaving the Body, and the Concerns of the Government, to their Diſpoſal. By this Means the Phariſees, who before had been the greateſt Enemies became her greateſt Friends; harranguing the People on the glorious Exploits of *Alexander*, the irreparable Loſs of ſo juſt a Prince; and by theſe rhetorical Strokes raiſed the Paſſions of the Multitude to ſuch a Pitch of Sorrow, that they thought him worthy of a funeral Solemnity beyond his Predeceſſors.

So great was the Power and Influence of the Phariſees, that the Queen might be ſaid meerly to execute their Orders. She appointed the Revival of the Phariſaical Ordinances and Traditions, which her father-in-law had aboliſhed; and every Thing was tranſacted in the Queen's Name by their Power.

In ſome few Caſes, indeed ſhe acted by her own proper Authority; for Inſtance, ſhe kept a Mercenary Army in Pay, and augmented her Forces to ſuch a Degree, that the Kings, her Neighbours, ſtood in Awe of her, as appeared by the Security they gave her as Hoſtages for their good Behaviour. Her Reign, would have been quiet and eaſy had ſhe not frequently been embroiled at the Inſtigation of this turbulent Sect, when they preſſed her for Juſtice upon thoſe that adviſed the Death of the eight hundred Perſons that were cruelly maſſacred.

She was ſo wrought upon by their remonſtrances and Expoſtulations, that ſhe put the Malecontents in Poſſeſſion of Strong Holds and Garriſons, upon Condition that *Hyrcania Alexandrias*, and *Macherus*, where ſhe depoſited her Jewels, Treaſure, and rich Goods, might be freed from their Juriſdictions.

She ſent her Son *Ariſtobulus*, with an Army toward *Damaſcus* againſt *Ptolemy*; but he returned ſoon after from that Expedition, without doing any Thing of Moment.

While

While Things were in this Poſture, a Report arrived, that *Tigranes*, King of *Armenia*, was advanced into *Syria*, with an Army of five hundred thouſand Men, with a Deſign to march ſuddenly into *Judea*.

Alexandra was ſo alarmed at this Intelligence, that ſhe ſent Ambaſſadors with Preſents to *Tigranes*, who was at that Time before *Ptolemais*.

The Queen *Selene*, otherwiſe called *Cleopatra*, who then held the Government of *Syria*, animated her Subjects to ſtand upon their Guard, and oppoſe *Tigrane*'s Entrance into the Counrry.

The Ambaſſadors acquitted themſelves ſo well toward the King on the Behalf of *Alexandra*, and the whole Nation of the Jews, that with great Inſtances of Reſpect to the Embaſſy, he gave them Aſſurance of all good Offices in Return. In ſhort, he took *Ptolemais*, and was no ſooner Maſter of it, than Word was brought him of the Rout of *Mithridates* by *Lucullus*, the Eſcape upon Purſuit into *Iberia*; and that when *Lucullus* ſaw he could not overtake him, he ſtruck off into *Armenia*, where he was at that Time ravaging the Country. Upon this Intelligence, *Tigranes* immediately marched off with his Army, and returned home.

The Queen *Alexandra*, ſome Time after this, fell dangerouſly ſick, which gave *Ariſtobulus* a fair Opportunity of accompliſhing his Deſign, ſo that ſlipping out in the Night, attended only by one Servant, he arrived privately at the Forts and Caſtles, where his Father's Friends were in Garriſon. He had been a long Time diſſatisfied with his Mother's Government; but conſidering her preſent Indiſpoſition, and the Danger of the whole Family's lying at the Mercy of the Phariſees, in Caſe of her Death, (*Hyrcanus* the next in ſucceſſion, being utterly unqualified for the Exerciſe of any public Charge) he found himſelf extemely embaraſſed under theſe Circumſtances.

No Mortal being privy to his Deſign, but his own Wife, whom he left at *Jeruſalem* with his Children, and went to *Agada*, where he was very generouſly entertained by *Galeſtes*, a Perſon of Eminence.

Alexandra miſſed him the very Day after his Departure, but not ſuſpecting his intent, till they came to underſtand by one Meſſenger after another, of the Surrender of divers Fortereſſes to him. This Turn of Affairs, put the Queen and the People into great Confuſion, who in order to prevent his Deſign, determined to ſecure his Wife and Children under a Guard in the Citadel, near the Temple.

However, in the Space of fifteen Days, he made himſelf Maſter of two and twenty Caſtles. And when he had thus ſecured himſelf, he collected an Army from Mount *Libanus*, *Trachonitus*, and the Princes thereabouts, who were forward enough to aſſiſt the ſtronger Side, from a Proſpect of the Advantages they might reaſonably expect for the Service of raiſing a new King to the Throne.

Upon

Upon this Situation of Affairs, *Hyrcanus*, and the Elders of the Jews, applied themſelves to the Queen for Advice and Direction. They informed her that *Ariſtobulus* was now poſſeſſed of great Power, that they found her, to their great Grief, in Extremity; but as long as ſhe lived they could do nothing without her Acquieſcence, even though they ſaw themſelves upon the very Brink of Ruin.

The Queen reply'd, That not being in a Condition to undertake the Affairs of Government, ſhe had laid all thoſe Cares aſide, and transferred them wholly on their wiſe Sect, who had the Means of Defence in their own Hands, the Strength of the Nation entire, and wanted neither Men nor Money. Soon after this Addreſs ſhe died, in the ninth Year of her reign, and the ſeventy third of her Life.

This Princeſs, though extremely ambitious in her Diſpoſition, evinced an extraordinary Concern for the due Regulation of her Government, to which ſhe attended as the main Object of her Purſuit.

She was no leſs eminent for her Moderation, Integrity and Juſtice, and upon the whole, may be tranſmitted to Poſterity, a Character, in divers Inſtances, worthy of Imitation.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE,

BOOK X.

CHAP. I.

An Agreement between Ariſtobulus *and* Hyrcanus *produces Terms of Accommodation.* Ariſtobulus *is beſieged in the Temple of* Jeruſalem *by* Aretas. *The Jews retire into* Egypt. *Stoning of* Onias. *Divine Judgments inflicted on the People for this Murder, together with their Perfidity and Sacrilege.* Ariſtobulus *compels* Aretas *to quit the Siege.* Aretas *and* Hyrcanus *ſuſtain an entire Defeat.* Pompey *marches againſt* Ariſtobulus, *who having delivered up his Caſtles retires in Diſguſt to* Jeruſalem, *whither* Pompey *advances, and beſieges that City.* Jeruſalem *divided into two Parties. The Temple is taken by Aſſault. Moderation of the Conqueror. The City made tributary.* Ariſtobulus *carried Priſoner to* Rome.

IT was in the third Year of the Olympiad one hundred and ſeventy-ſeven, *Hyrcanus* took upon himſelf the Pontificate, and *Ariſtobulus* immediately made War upon him. They engaged at *Jericho*, and many of *Hyrcanus's* Soldiers deſerted, and went over to his Brother; himſelf being driven into the Citadel, where the Wife and Children of *Ariſtobulus* were kept Priſoners, by the Orders and Direction of his Mother; and the Remainder of the Faction took Sanctuary for a Time within the Verge of the Temple, but ſurrendered themſelves ſoon after.

In Proceſs of Time, their Enmity ſubſided, and the Brothers came to an Accommodation, on Condition that *Ariſtobulus* ſhould be eſtabliſhed in the Poſſeſſion of the Government, and *Hyrcanus* be allowed to live private upon his own Fortune, without Moleſtation. This Contract was ſigned and ratified in the Temple, with the uſual Formalities, after which

which the Brothers departed in perfect Amity to their reſpective Places of Reſidence.

In Conſequence of an Agreement between *Hyrcanus* and an Eaſtern Prince called *Aretas*, who kept his Court at a Place called *Petra*; the latter advanced againſt *Ariſtobulus* with an Army of fifty thouſand Horſe and Foot; fought, and overcame him; inſomuch, that finding himſelf abandoned by his Soldiers going over to *Hyrcanus*, he was forced to fly for Refuge to Jeruſalem; where *Aretas*, with his whole Army attacked him in the very Temple; the People unanimouſly joining with *Hyrcanus* againſt *Ariſtobulus*, the Prieſts only excepted.

Aretas, on the other Hand, with his Jews, as well as Arabians, carried on the Aſſault with the utmoſt Vigour. While this Tranſaction was in Hand, the Feaſt of unleavened Bread coming on, which the Jews call the Paſchal, the chief Men of the Jews withdrew themſelves out of the Country, and went into *Egypt*; at which Time, one *Onias*, a righteous Man apprehending the Approach of a civil War, retired and concealed himſelf.

The Jews reflecting upon the Piety of this Man, and that he had obtained Rain from God in an extreme Drought, brought him out into the Camp, and there requeſted of him, that as he had formerly delivered them from the Judgment of a Famine, he would now relieve them from a moſt deſtructive War, by denouncing a Curſe upon *Ariſtobulus* and his whole Faction.

He refuſed Compliance a conſiderable Time, till at Length being overruled by the Multitude, he ſtood up in the Midſt of them, and delivered Ejaculatory Prayer to this Purpoſe; *Lord, thou art the King of Kings; and ſince both we who ſtand here before thee are thy People, and they that are beſieged in the Temple, are thy Prieſts, I do humbly beſeech thee not to hear the Prayer of either of them one againſt the other.*

Upon theſe Words ſome of the Jewiſh Rabble that ſtood by, ſtoned him to Death. This Barbarity was followed immediately by a divine Judgment, which thus avenged the Murder of *Onias*: While *Ariſtobulus* with the Prieſts were thus beſet in the Temple, the paſchal Feſtival came on; at which Time, according to Cuſtom, the Jews offered up a Number of Sacrifices; but the Beſieged, not having ſo many as they had Occaſion for, deſired their Brethren to ſupply them at their own Price; upon which they agreed at one Thouſand Drachmas each Beaſt, and the Money to be paid down on Delivery.

Ariſtobulus and the Prieſts agreed to the Conditions, and let down the Money with a Rope from the Temple Wall. When the Beſiegers had the Money, they refuſed to deliver the Victims; and ſuch was their Impiety, that they did not only break Faith with Men, but ſacrilegiouſly robbed God himſelf of a Service that was dedicated to his Honour.

The

The Prieſts upon this Perfidy, impoſed upon them under the Contenance of an Agreement, joined in a Prayer to God, that the Iniquity might not eſcape unpuniſhed. Their Prayers were heard, and the Judgment not long deferred; for there aroſe immediately a violent Tempeſt, that deſtroyed all the Fruits of the Earth through the whole Province; ſo that one Meaſure of Wheat was ſold for fifteen Drachmas.

Pompey was at this Time detained in *Armenia*, by a War he maintained there with *Tigranes*; but in this Interim ſent *Scaurus* into *Syria*. As he was upon the Way, there come Ambaſſadors from *Hyrcanus* and *Ariſtobulus*, ſolliciting an Alliance offenſive and defenſive. *Ariſtobulus*, offered four hundred Talents, and *Hyrcanus* the ſame Conſideration. *Scaurus* inclined rather to *Ariſtobulus*, as the moſt generous of the two, *Scaurus* accepted his Money, and ordered *Aretas* to withdraw, upon the Peril of being accounted an Enemy to the Roman People.

Scaurus, after this, went to *Damaſcus*, and *Ariſtobulus* advanced with a mighty Army againſt *Aretas* and *Hyrcanus*; and engaging them in a Place called *Papyron*, gave them an overthrow, with the Loſs of about ſeven thouſand of the Enemy.

Pompey, incenſed, as the arrogant Behaviour of *Ariſtobulus*, advanced againſt him at the Head of a formidable Army, and receiving Intelligence, that he had retreated to a Mountain in the Heart of *Judea*, ſent him a Summons to come down and ſpeak with him. *Ariſtobulus* obeyed the Summons, and there paſſed ſome Diſcourſe between them, concerning the two Brothers; after which *Ariſtobulus*, with *Pompey's* Leave, returned to the Caſtle.

This Intercourſe he repeated in order to maintain good Terms with *Pompey*, as the moſt likely Way to compaſs his End; But this did not hinder him from putting himſelf into a Poſture of Defence in caſe of an Attack. *Pompey*, at Length, ordered him to deliver up all the Caſtles that he was Maſter of, and to ſignify his Will and Pleaſure to the Governors under his own Hand, that there might be no Plea for Compliance with his Order.

Ariſtobulus did as he was ordered, but reſented it ſo heinouſly, that he went forthwith to *Jeruſalem*, to make Preparations for carrying on a War.

Pompey firſt having refreſhed his People, advanced toward *Jeruſalem*. *Ariſtobulus*, by this Time repented of what he had done, and went out to meet him with an Offering of a Sum of Money, and the Command of the Town, for deſiſting from Hoſtilities. *Pompey* accepted his Propoſals, and ſent *Gabinius* with a Body of Men into the City to receive the Money: But this was meer Illuſion, for the Gates were ſhut againſt him and he came back as he went out; the Fault being laid upon the Soldiers that would not ſtand to the Argument. *Pompey* was ſo incenſed at this Inſult, that he kept a ſtricter Guard upon *Ariſtobulus*, and

want

went himself to *Jerusalem*, determined on the Conquest of that famous and well fortified City.

While *Pompey* was before the Town, the Citizens were divided concerning the Manner in which they should act in this critical Juncture: Some were for yielding; others for holding out, and preparing for a War; especially as *Aristobulus* was kept a Prisoner. Thus divided, one Party took Possession in the Temple, and broke down the Bridge between that and the City; while the other not only gave Entrance to the Army, but delivered up both City and Palace into the Hands of *Pompey*; who presently sent *Piso* his Lieutenant, with Part of his Army to take Charge of both. When Things were come to this Pass, *Pompey* made them a Proposal of Peace; but upon their Refusal to treat, provided for an Assault; *Hyrcanus* supplying him with all necessary Assistance.

The North Side of the Temple being the weakest Part, *Pompey* proposed to begin his Attack in that Quarter. It was encompassed with high Towers, and surrounded with a wide and deep Ditch. The City Side, toward *Pompey*'s Station was impassable, for Rocks and Precipices; but the Romans, with infinite Labour and Difficulty, filled up the Ditch with Timber, and other Materials, and raised Platforms and Ramparts to such a prodigious Height, that with Engines of Battery which they brought from *Tyre*, they bombarded the Temple-Wall; yet if it had not been for the Advantage they took of the Sabbath, the Romans would not have gained their Point but with extreme Danger and Labour.

When the Romans understood the Regard they paid to their Sabbath, and observed that they made no Opposition to the advancing of their Bulwarks, and the fixing of their Machines, they employed the Sabbath in Preparation for the Action of the next Day, without attempting any Violence upon the Present. This Temple however, was taken upon a Fasting-Day, in the third Month of the Siege; *Caius Antonius*, and *Marcus Tullius Cicero*, being Consuls.

Upon the Enemies forcing the Place, they put every Man to Death, nor was this Cruelty sufficient to deter the Priests from prosecuting the Duties of their Functions, accounting it less evil to fall into the Hands of an unmerciful Enemy, than to abandon their holy Profession, or fail in the least Point of Obedience to their Country's Rites and Ceremonies.

The Enemy plied their Engines upon the great Tower, till by Dint of repeated Batteries they shook it to Pieces, and brought it down to the the Ground, carrying away a great Part of the next Wall along with it in the Ruins. This Breach was no sooner made, than the Enemy pressed in great Numbers into the Temple. Thus was this sacred Place taken by Assault, and from a Scene of Worship converted into a Scene of Blood being strewed with dead Bodies, some killed by the Romans, others by Consent, dispatching

diſpatching one another; ſome again caſting themſelves down headlong from the Walls, and others ſetting Fire to the Houſes over their Heads, rather than be Spectators of the Barbarities that were committed. There were ſlain about twelve thouſand Jews, and not many Romans.

Abſalom, the Uncle, and the Father in Law of *Ariſtobulus*, was taken Priſoner. Theſe Outrages were attended with many Violations of the ſacred Rites of Religion; but *Pompey* and his Train behaved with great Moderation; and the Conqueror not only abſtained from touching any of the holy Things, but ordered the Officers of the Temple next Day to purge the Place, and to offer Sacrifices according to their own Cuſtoms and Ordinanes.

He reſtored *Hyrcanus* to the Pontificate, partly for the good Offices he had received from him, and partly for the Service he had done him in hindering the Jews from taking up Arms for *Ariſtobulus*. He rendered *Jeruſalem* tributary to the Romans, and reduced all the Places that the Jews poſſeſſed in *Celo-Syria* to their Allegiance, confining that populous and powerful Nation within the Compaſs of their antient Bounds.

From this Period we may juſtly date the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the Subjection of the Jewiſh Nation to the Roman Yoke, having been compelled to reſtore to the *Syrians* what they had taken in the Courſe of a War with them, as well as ſubmit to the Transferment of the ſovereign Authority for the Order of the Pontificate, to the promiſcuous Herd of the common People.

CHAP. II.

Judea *having been rendered tributary to the Romans, they ſend* Gabinius *to check the Incurſions of* Alexander, *Son of* Ariſtobulus. *He reſtores* Hyrcanus *to the Pontificate, and makes ſome pontifical Regulations. Succeeds in his Expedition, and returns to Rome.* Craſſus *is ſent to* Judea. *Rifles the Temple.* Ariſtobulus *poiſoned, and Alexander beheaded.* Cæſar *having overcame the Faction of* Pompey, *favours the Intereſt of* Hyrcanus *and* Antipater. *Permits them to rebuild* Juruſalem. *A League formed between* Athens *and* Judea. *Alſo between the Roman Senate, and the Jews.*

JUDEA, through the Succeſs of *Pompey*, becoming ſubject to the Roman Power; and being harraſſed by the Inroads of *Alexander*, the Son of *Ariſtobulus*; *Gabinus* was ſent to repel his Invaſions, which having ſpeedily affected, he cauſed *Hyrcanus* to be brought to *Jeruſalem*, and reſtored to the Office and Exerciſe of his Prieſthood.

There were then conſtituted five Courts of Juſtice, and a Diviſion was made of the whole Province into five equal Parts; ſo that ſome repaired for judicial Deciſion to *Jeraſalem*, others to *Gadara*, and others alſo to *Amathus*, *Jericho*, or *Saphora*, which is

is a City of *Galilee*. They were by this Means delivered from the Tyranny they complained of, and reſtored to the Form of an *Ariſtocracy*.

This General, after a Series of Conqueſts over *Ariſtobulus* and *Alexander*, returned to *Rome*, was ſucceeded in his Commiſſion by *Craſſus*, who treated not the Jews with the Lenity of his Predeceſſor; for being engaged in making Preparation for a War with the Parthians, when he arrived in *Judea*, he ſeized not only the two thouſand Talents that *Pompey* had ſpared, but pillaged the Temple of Gold to the Value of eight thouſand Talents more. He carried away with him alſo a Wedge of Gold of three hundred Minas,* each Mina being computed at two Pounds and an Half.

The prodigious Maſs of Money that was depoſited in this Temple, was the Acquiſition of a long Courſe of Time, and collected from all Quarters of the World, wherever the Worſhip of the true God was known.

When *Craſſus* had thus rifled the Temple of *Judea* from Top to Bottom, he advanced againſt the Pathians, and gave them Battle, where being cut off, together with his whole Army, he retreated into *Syria*, where he ſtopped the Progreſs of the Parthians, that were grown inſolent upon their Succeſs. He went afterward to *Tyre*, and ſo to *Judea*, where he took *Taricheæ* by Aſſault, and thirty thouſand Priſoners; and amongſt the reſt *Pitholæus*, *Ariſtobulus's* Friend, whom he cauſed to be put to Death by the Advice of *Antipater*, a Perſon of very conſiderable Influence with the *Idumeans*, upon the Account of a Marriage with an Arabian Lady of an illuſtrious Extraction, called *Cypron*, by whom he had four Sons, *Phaſael* and *Herod*, (afterwards King,) *Joſeph* and *Pheroras*, and an only Daughter named *Salome*.

Antipater by his Generoſity and Affability had acquired univerſal Eſteem amongſt the neighbouring Princes and Potentates, and contributed not a little towards reconciling the Romans to the Jewiſh State and Nation.

When *Cæſar's* Party had prevailed, and he conſequently became Maſter of *Rome*; *Ariſtobulus*, having been releaſed by the Conqueror, was diſpatched into *Syria*, with the Command of two Legions to keep that Province in Order. But the Happineſs he promiſed himſelf in the Honour of being *Ceſar's* Favourite was not of long Duration; for *Pompey's* Faction found Means in a ſhort Time to diſpatch him by Poiſon, and the *Ceſareans* took Care of the Funeral.

* An *Hebrew* Mina of Gold, according to Calmet's tables, weighed one Pound, one ounce, thirteen Penny weights, eighteen Grains, and in Value amounted to fifty four Pounds fifteen Shillings; three hundred therefore muſt weigh no more than three hundred forty two Ounces, five Penny weights; and there Value amount only to ſixteen thouſand four hundred twenty five Pounds Engliſh Money.

His Body lay embalmed a long Time, till *Anthony* ſent it into *Judea*, to be interred among their Kings.

Scipio cauſed the Head of *Alexander*, the Son of *Ariſtobulus*, to be cut off by Order of *Pompey*, for former ſeditious Practices againſt the *Romans*, and the Command was executed at *Antioch*.

Hyrcanus and *Antipates*, who now acted conjunctively in the Cauſe of the Jews, exerted themſelves with ſuch Vigour and Reſolution, that when *Cæſar* arrived in *Syria*, he conferred the Pontificate in the former, and made the other a Freeman of *Rome*, veſting him with all the Privileges of that City.

About this Time *Antigonus*, the Son of *Ariſtobulus*, came with a Complaint to *Cæſar*, that his Father had been poiſoned by a Faction, for bearing Arms in his Service, and that his Brother had his Head taken off at *Scipio*'s Inſtigation; ſetting forth how he was diſinherited and ejected, and preſented himſelf as an Object of his Compaſſion. He reflected alſo upon *Hyrcanus* and *Antipater*, as Uſurpers: but *Antipater*, being then preſent, wiped off theſe Reproaches, by expoſing the turbulent and ſeditious humour of *Antigonus*, and how buſy he was in all factious Cabals, not forgetting to remind *Cæſar* of his own Services, appealing to the Proofs he had given of his Diſpoſition and Integrity.

Cæſar in fine, upon a full Hearing of his Repreſentation, pronounced *Hyrcanus* to be High Prieſt, gave *Antipator* this Choice of any Command, and confered upon him the Lieutenancy of *Judea*.

The Walls of *Jeruſalem* lying at this Time in Ruin, as they were left upon *Pompey*'s demoliſhing them. *Hyrcanus* requeſted *Cæſar* for Permiſſion to rebuild them; his Requeſt was immediately granted with all the Forms of Reſpect, and Letters diſpatched to the Conſuls at *Rome*, for the Entering of the Reſolution in the Records of the Capital; the Copy of the Decree running as follows;

A Decree of the Senate aſſembled in the Temple of Concord, on the 15th Day of the Month of December, *preſent* L. Coponius, *and* Caius Parimus Quirinus.

WHEREAS it appeareth unto this Senate, upon the Report of Valerius, *the Son of* Lucius, Prætor, *that it is requeſted and propoſed by* Alexander, *the Son of* Dorotheus, *Ambaſſadors on the Behalf of the Jews, good Men, and our faithful Allies, that the antient League of Friendſhip may be renewed between us; and that in Token of their Gratitude, they have brought a Preſent of a Golden Cup and Buckler, valued at ſixty Thouſand Crowns.*

Alſo deſiring Letters of Recommendation to all Governors and free Towns for a Paſſage, both by Sea and Land, thro' all their Ports and Territories.

Be it therefore ordered by this Senate, that the ſame League of Friendſhip and Society be renewed and eſtabliſhed, all the Deſires of the ſaid Ambaſſador

baſſadors agreed unto and granted, and their Preſents accepted.

This was in the ninth Year of the Pontificate and Principality of *Hyrcanus*, and in the Month of *Panemus*.

This Prince of the Jews had great Honour done him alſo by the Republic of *Athens*, in Acknowledgment of their Obligations to him; for they ſent him a Decree to the following Purpoſe;

A Decree of the Athenians, *bearing Date the* 25 *of* Panemus.

Foraſmuch as Hyrcanus, *the Son of* Alexander, *and the High Prieſt and Prince of the Jews, hath upon all Occaſion, both public and private, as well in the generous Reception, Entertainment, and Accommodation of our Ambaſſadors, as otherwiſe, giving Proof of a ſingular Affection and Eſteem, both for our Nation in general, and the Citizens of* Athens *in particular, whereof we have received many Inſtances.*

And foraſmuch as we have received credible Information from Theodoſius, *of the Virtue of the ſaid excellent Prince, and of his friendly Diſpoſition to do us all the good Offices in his Power, we have reſolved to preſent him with the honorary Acknowledgment of a Crown of Gold, and to erect a brazen Statue to him in the Temple of the People and the Graces, for the Fame of his Memory; and to have it notified by Proclamation at the exhibiting of any new Shew, in all the Theatres and Places of public Exerciſe, and Spectacles in Honour of* Bacchus, Minerva, Ceres, &c. *that we have preſented him with this Crown out of a Veneration for his Virtue.*

And we do further require of all our Governors and Magiſtrates to be aiding and aſſiſting in the effectual Improvement of theſe our Conceſſions to the beſt Advantage of our Friends and Aſſociates, ſo long as this Amity ſhall continue between us; for the Manifeſtation of our Gratitude, Piety, and Juſtice toward all Men of Worth and Honour, and the encouraging of good Offices and Inclinations toward us for the future.

We do likewiſe order, that a fit Choice be forthwith made of Ambaſſadors from among the Athenians, *to attend* Hyrcanus *in our Name, and with this our Decree and Preſents; and to provoke an Emulation to outdo us in this generous Way of Competition.*

So far may ſuffice for the Intercourſe of Friendſhip that paſſed between the Romans and the Athenians with *Hyrcanus*.

When *Ceſar* had ſettled his Affairs in *Syria*, he returned with his Navy, accompanied by *Antipator*, who immediately upon his Return to *Jeruſalem*, gave Orders for the Repairing of the Walls that *Pompey* had thrown down; taking a Tour at the ſame Time throughout the Province, to promote Order and Decorum.

He laid before them the Bleſſings of a dutiful Obedience to their Prince, in

the peaceable Enjoyment of their Liberties and Poſſeſſions, and the dangerous Conſequences of ſeditious Practices and Innovations, which would force Governors to turn Perſecutors, Hyrcanus *to turn Tyrant, and the moſt neceſſary of their Patrons and Allies, even the* Ceſars, *and the Senate of* Rome, *to become their implacable Enemies.*

With theſe Admonitions he diſpoſed the whole Country to Peace and Quiet.

CHAP. III.

Antipater *effects the Preferment of his Sons,* Phaſael *and* Herod. *Is embroiled thro' the Ambition of* Herod, *who is cited before the Judges. Bold Addreſs of* Simeas *upon the Occaſion. Inſolence of* Herod *toward* Hyrcanus. *Divers Proclamations in Favour of the Jews.*

ANTIPATER in this State of Elevation, availed himſelf of the Inactivity of *Hyrcanus,* to aggrandize his own Family, by putting his two eldeſt Sons *Phaſael* and *Herod* into two eminent Commands, appointing the former that of *Jeruſalem.* with the adjacent Country; and conferring on *Herod,* his ſecond Son, the Government of *Galilee.*

Herod, though at that Time but fifteen Years of Age, was of a pregnant Genius, and enterprizing Spirit, and promiſed to ſignalize himſelf in the Command.

The Borders of *Syria* were in thoſe Days very much infeſted with Robbers; ſo that the firſt Inſtance of his Proweſs was upon a vagabond Troop of Free Booters, wherein he took *Ezekiah,* their Commander, Priſoner, with ſeveral of their Companions, and put them to Death.

This Action gained him ſuch Reputation, that his Name was celebrated through all the Towns and Villages, as their Deliverer, and the Author of their Security and Repoſe by the Fame of this Exploit, he became alſo known to *Sextus,* the Kinſman of *Ceſar* the Great, who had then the Adminſtration of *Syria.* Beſide, it kindled an Emulation in *Phaſael* likewiſe, to imitate the Example of his Brother, who apply'd himſelf to the Arts of Popularity, as the moſt probable Way for the compaſſing of his End.

The Power and Influence of *Antipater* created him many Enemies among the leading Men of the Jews; ſeveral of whom endeavoured to traduce his Character, and bring upon him the popular Odium, by inſinuating, that he had imbezzled conſiderable Sums, which he received from *Hyrcanus* for the Uſe of the Romans.

But the principal Thing which they alledged as the Cauſe of their Diſatisfaction, was the violent, daring and ambitious Temper of *Herod,* inſomuch that in the Heat of their Indignation, they went to *Hyrcanus* with a Complaint, to this Effect.

" How long ſhall the State ſuſ-
" tain theſe Injuries, unnoticed by
" you

" you? Do not you perceive that " the Dignities, Profits and Prero- " gatives of royal Power, are ſhared " between *Antipater*, and his two " Sons; and that you yourſelf have " only the empty Name and Title " of a Prince? Beware of letting " Things go too far, and being over " ſecure; for certainly the Safety of " your Perſon and Government lie " equally at Stake.

In conſequence of this Application to *Hyrcanus*, *Herod* was cited to appear before a Bench of Judges.

He obeyed his Summons, and having ſtood a conſiderable Time in the Court with his Face toward the Judges without any Perſons attempting to open the Cauſe; at length *Sameas* an upright and eloquent Counſellor, thus harangued the Culprit and the Court.

With the Permiſſion of yourſelf, Sir, and of this honourable Court, I muſt obſerve, that this is the firſt Time that ever I ſaw a Priſoner at the Bar, behaving himſelf with ſuch an Air of Vanity and Confidence.

It has been the Practice formerly, of Perſons in his Condition, to demean themſelves, with Sobriety and Reſignation; but we have a Criminal that values himſelf upon his Guards, his Ornaments, and his Purple; and ſtands in a Poſture to make public Juſtice more dangerous to the Court than to the Criminal. God is a God of Righteouſneſs and Power; and the Time will come when this very Man, whom you ſuffer to take theſe Liberties, ſhall be the Ruin of you, both King and Judges.

Not long after, upon Herod's getting Poſſeſſion of the Government, he put the King to Death, and all the Judges, except *Sameas*; for whom he had a ſingular Honour, in Regard both of his Integrity and Juſtice, and more particularly, as the Perſon, that, after the beſieging of the City by himſelf and *Soſias*, was inſtrumental to the admitting of him into the Place: With this further Declaration, that it was a Judgment upon them for their Sins, and a Puniſhment not to be avoided.

Herod apprehenſive of Danger withdrew and reſigned himſelf to the Care and Protection of *Sextus Ceſar*, who ſettled him in Conſideration of a ſum of Money in the Government of *Celo-Syria*. *Herod* thus poſſeſſed of conſiderable Power, and exaſperated at the Indignity of being expos'd to a Trial, he marched againſt *Hyrcanus* with an Army; and had it not been for the Importunities of his Father, and his Brother, he had moſt certainly fallen upon Jeruſalem.

But *Herod* was ſo wrought upon by this Advice, that he contented himſelf with ſhewing the People what Power and Reputation he had upon this Occaſion.

In order to demonſtrate the Favour in which the Jews were held by the Romans, the Conquerors of the World, we cite the following Decree of the Senate that paſſed ſoon after *Julius Ceſar* aſſumed the important Dignity.

Caias

Caius Julius Ceſar, *Emperor*, Pontifex Maximus, *and the ſecond Time Dictator, to the Magiſtracy, Senate, and the People of* Sidon, *greeting.*

I Myſelf, and the Army are in Health, and if you are well, all is well. I ſend you the Copy of a Letter of ours to Hyrcanus, *the Son of* Alexander *the Prince and High Prieſt of the Jews, to be engraved upon a braſs Table, the Inſcription in Latin and Greek, and to remain among your Regiſters for after Times. The Letter itſelf in Subſtance is as follows:*

C. Julius Ceſar, *Emperor, the ſecond Time Dictator, and* Pontifex Maximus, *hath, with the Advice and Conſent of the Senate, appointed the Publication of this Decree.*

Foraſmuch as Hyrcanus, *the Son of* Alexander, *a Jew, hath at all Times, as well as in War as in Peace, approved himſelf to be our truſty good Friend and Ally, as appeareth by ſeveral Atteſtations of unqueſtionable Credit, and particularly by the Supply of fifteen hundred choice Men that he ſent to* Mithridates, *to my Aſſiſtance in the late* Alexandrian *War. Theſe Services and good Offices duly conſidered, I do hereby confirm and eſtabliſh unto* Hyrcanus, *and his Heirs, the perpetual Government of the Jews, both as their Prince and High Prieſt, after the Manner and Method of their own Laws; and from this Time forward, enroll them among my truſty and beloved Friends, and ratify an Affinity with them as my Aſſociates.*

And it is my Pleaſure likewiſe, that all the legal Pontifical Rites and Priviliges be devolved upon him and his Sons for ever. And in caſe any Controverſy ſhall ariſe among the People concerning the Jewiſh Diſcipline, himſelf, and his Family, in the courſe of Succeſſion, to be the only Judges of it.

It is moreover my Will and Pleaſure, that the Jews be diſcharged the Burden of Winter Quarters, and of all public Payments.

We ſhall now come to ſome of his particular Grants, Reſolutions, and decrees.

Caius Ceſar, *Emperor, Dictator, and Conſul, taking into his Conſideration the Honour, the Friendſhip, and the good Services of* Hyrcanus, *doth hereby, for the Benefit and Advantage of the Senate and People of* Rome, *grant unto* Hyrcanus, *and to his Sons after him, by Succeſſion, the Authority and Office of Princes and Prieſts of* Jeruſalem, *and of the whole Nation of the* Jews, *to be by them exerciſed and enjoyed, in the ſame Manner as their Anceſtors.*

And we farther ordain and appoint, that the City of Jeruſalem *ſhall be repaired and fortified; and that* Hyrcanus, *ſhall have the Adminiſtration of the Government, with an Abatement upon the Duty every ſecond Year of Part of their Taxes, and an Exemption from Carriages and other Tributes.*

Caius Julius, *the fourth Time Emperor*

peror, the fifth Time Conſul, and perpetual Dictator, makes this Mention of Hyrcanus, *the Son of* Alexander, *the Prince and High Prieſt of the Jews.*

Whereas my Predeceſſors, as well in the Provinces as in the Senate, have formerly born witneſs to many honourable Reports on the Behalf of the High Prieſt Hyrcanus, *and the generality of the Jews, who have thereupon received the Thanks of the Senate and People of Rome, in Acknowledgment of their Worth and Goodneſs, we look upon their friendly Offices, as Obligations never to be forgotten; and upon ourſelves, as bound in the Name of the Senate and People of Rome, to give* Hyrcanus, *his Family and Countrymen, all poſſible Demonſtrations of the Senſe we have of their Amity and Eſteem.*

Many others paſſed of the ſame kind; but theſe we omit, as this ſuffices for our Purpoſe.

CHAP. IV.

After the Death of Ceſar, Caſſius *enters into a Faction, and joins with* Herod *in oppreſſing the Jews. Divers Inſtances of the Cruelty and Ambition of Herod.* Antipater *is poiſoned. Regard of* Herod *for the Tyrians. He defeats* Antigonus. *Edict in Favour of the Jews.*

CESAR having been treacherouſly aſſaſſinated in the Senate Houſe, the Citizens of *Rome* formed Parties and Factions, which were followed by a Civil War. *Caſſius* one of the leading Men among the Conſpirators obtained the Command of the Army in *Syria*, which was then before *Apamia*; raiſed the Siege, and brought over *Marcus* and *Baſſus* into his Intereſt; and proceeded from Place to Place, collecting Men, Money, and Arms wherever he came, but oppreſſing *Judea* above all the Reſt, by an Impoſition of between ſeven and eight hundred Talents of Silver.

In this Confuſion, *Antipater* committed the Care of levying one Part of this Money to his two Sons, and the reſt of it to *Malichus*, (a traitorly Diſpoſition) together with ſome others. *Herod*, who was willing to oblige the Romans at the Expence of the People over whom he preſided, began with the moſt acceptable Preſents to *Caſſius*, of the Contribution of *Galilee*, as the firſt Fruits of his Service; but ſeveral Cities under other Governors, were expoſed to publick Sale, by Order of *Caſſius*, who was ſo exaſperated againſt *Malichus*, upon this Occaſion that if *Hyrcanus* had not pacified him with a Compoſition of a hundred Talents out of his own Coffers, by the Hands of *Antipater*, it would have coſt him his Life.

Malichus therefore entered into a Plot againſt *Antipater*, inferring, that if he was taken off, *Hyrcanus* would find himſelf more eaſy and ſecure in his Government. *Antipater* ſuſpecting his Deſign, paſſed the River *Jordan*, and put himſelf at the Head of as many Jews and Arabians as he could

could collect; but *Malichus*, who was bold and artful, finding himself ſuſpected, went to *Antipater* and his Sons, and cleared himſelf of the Suſpicion by the Dint of Perjury.

Caſſius having aſſembled a powerful Army and fitted out a conſiderable Fleet, conferred the Command of both on *Herod*, and appointed him at the ſame Time Governor of *Celo-Syria*, with a further Promiſe of the Kingdom of *Judea*, as ſoon as the War ſhould be over with *Anthony*, and the younger, *Ceſar*, afterward *Auguſtus*, in which they were then engaged.

The Promotion of *Herod* rendering *Malichus* jealous of the Intereſt that would follow to his Father *Antipater*, he bribed a Servant of *Hyrcanus* to poiſon him at his Maſter's Table, and thereupon, with a Guard of Soldiers took Poſſeſſion of the City. Such was the unhappy End of *Antipater*; a juſt and a good Man, and a true Lover of his Coutry.

Herod and *Phaſael* reſented the Murder of their Father, but *Malichus* had the Confidence to ſtand upon his Juſtification. The two Brothers were both agreed in the Determination of a Revenge; but the Queſtion was, in what Manner it was to be effected.

Antigonus, the Son of *Ariſtobulus*, now entered into a Deſign to oppoſe *Herod*, and with this View engaged *Fabius* for a Sum of Money to join with him in raiſing an Army, taking *Marion* alſo into his Aſſiſtance, who, by the Favour of *Caſſius*, had obtained the Command of *Tyre*, and of all *Syria*, having ſettled ſeveral Garriſons there, and three in *Galilee*, upon his own Borders; but *Herod* quickly reduced theſe Places, treating the Tyrians who kept them, with every Token of Reſpect, Tenderneſs, and Generoſity, for the Affection he bore towards them.

His next Buſineſs was immediately to march up to *Antigonus*, whom he encountered and defeated upon his very Entrance into *Judea*, and returning triumphant from thence to *Jeruſalem*, where he was received by *Hyrcanus* and the whole People, with every Inſtance of Honour and Eſteem.

After the Defeat of *Caſſius* at *Philippi*, by *Anthony* and *Auguſtus*, *Ceſar* went into *Gaul*, and *Anthony* into *Aſia*, who was complimented on his March in *Bithynia* with Embaſſies and Applications from ſeveral Parts; and among others, with Complaints and Accuſations againſt *Phaſael* and *Herod*, from many eminent Perſons among the Jews, ſuggeſting that *Hyrcanus*, though he had the Name of Governor, was in Effect, but a nominal Prince; for that the two Brothers had uſurped the Authority and Adminiſtration to themſelves.

Herod pleaded ſo well for himſelf and enforced his Arguments with ſo large a Sum of Money, that his Adverſaries were not admitted to be heard againſt him.

Upon *Anthony*'s coming to *Epheſus*, Ambaſſadors were ſent from *Hyrcanus*, the High Prieſt, and the whole Body of the Jews, with a Crown of Gold, deſiring that their Coun-

Countrymen, who were carried away Priſoners by *Caſſius*, contrary to the Rules of War, might be ſet at Liberty, and their Lands reſtored to thoſe who had been wrongfully deprived of them.

Their Requeſt was found to be ſo reaſonable, that *Anthony* preſently granted their Petition, and wrote to *Hyrcanus*, and to the Jews, and likewiſe diſpatched an Edict to the *Tyrians*, to the following Effect:

Marcus Antonius, *Emperor, to* Hyrcanus *the Highprieſt, and Prince of the Jews, greeting, Joy and Health.*

WHEREAS *we have received from* Lyſimachus *the Son of* Pauſanias, Joſeph *the Son of* Menneus, *and* Alexander *the Son of* Theodorus, *your Ambaſſadors, at* Epheſus, *freſh Aſſurances of the Continuance of yours and your People's Affection for us, according to what hath been formerly exhibited to us at Rome; in which Commiſſion they have faithfully acquitted themſelves; and whereas we are abundantly ſatisfied with the ſincerity of your Intentions, aud more from the Proof we have had of your good Faith, Piety, annd Virtue, than by the Force of Words, we do heartily agree to your Propoſals, and Embrace your Friendſhip.*

It is our Pleaſure, that you ſhall quietly enjoy to yourſelves and your Heirs, all the Graces and Privileges unto you granted by myſelf and Dolobella, *with an Expreſs Inhibition to the* Tyrians, *that they give you no Sort of Moleſtation, and as poſitively commanding them to make full Reſtitution of all the Goods and Eſtates that had been taken away from the Jews, declaring our Acceptance alſo of the Crown you were pleaſed to ſend.*

CHAP. V.

Contract of Antigonus *with the* Parthians, *to depoſe* Hyrcanus, *and take off* Herod *and his Party.* Hercanus *and* Phaſael *are ſeized, but* Herod *eludes their Deſign, and after ſeveral Skirmiſhes, makes his Eſcape, together with a conſiderable Party. Builds* Herodium. Jeruſalem *beſieged.* Antigonus *obtains the Government, and avenges himſelf on* Hyrcanus. Phaſael *deſtroys himſelf.* Herod *departs towards* Egypt; *thence proceeds to* Rome. *Is honoured by* Auguſtus; *made King of* Judea, *and conducted with great Pomp to the Capital.*

ANTIGONUS, Son of *Ariſtobulus*, envious of the Power of *Hyrcanus*, and his Party, contracted with the *Parthians*, for a thouſand Talents, and five hundred of the fineſt Women, to eject the preſent Poſſeſſion, and inveſt him with the Government of *Judea*.

Accordingly the King ſent his Son *Pacorus*, and his General *Bargaphames*, with a powerful Army to Invade that Country. Having divided their Forces, *Pacorus* marched along the

the Coaſt; and *Bazaphame* kept his Rout through the Inland Part. The King's Son, having *Antigonus* in his Party, was joined by the Jews that dwelt about Mount *Carmel*, and many other in the Courſe of their March, ſo that he had collected a very formidable Army, and boldly advanced to the City of *Jeruſalem*, with a determined Reſolution to attack *Herod* and *Phaſael* in the royal Palace.

Upon their arrival, a conſiderable Faction declared in Favour of *Antigonus* and *Herod*, after ſome fruitleſs Reſiſtance, and vain Endeavours to keep the City, betook himſelf to Flight.

In the mean Time the *Parthians* having ſeized *Hyrcanus* and *Phaſael*, and loaded them with Irons. *Herod* finding himſelf in an Enemy's Country, amongſt a People, who were averſe to his Perſon and Government determined to proſecute his Journey to the Caſtle of *Maſiada*, together with his neareſt Relations, leſt they likewiſe ſhould fall into the Hands of the combined Parties.

In their haſty Retreat, the Carriage in which *Herod*'s Mother rode, was unhapppily overſet, and ſuch was the concern of their Son, that according to the Teſtimony of *Joſephus*, he attempted to ſtab himſelf, but being prevented from the Execution of ſo raſh a Deſign, perſued his Journey towards the intended Aſylum.

As the Number of thoſe who attended him in his Flight was very conſiderable; they repulſed divers Parties which endeavoured to moleſt them, and came off victorious. So ſtrongly was this Circumſtance impreſſed upon the Mind of *Herod*, that when he afterwards aſcended the Throne of *Judea*, he erected a ſpacious Palace founded a Village upon the Spot whereon he had given the Enemy the moſt ſignal repulſe, and called it *Herodium*.

Being met at *Reſſa*, a Town of *Idumea*, by his Brother *Joſeph*, they deliberated on future Meaſures, and reflecting that the Caſtle of *Maſſada*, was not ſufficiently extenſive to contain their Numbers, concluded to ſeparate, ſo that having furniſhed themſelves with Proviſions, and diſpoſed of their Women and moſt valuable Baggage in the Caſtle, which was well furniſhed with Neceſſaries, they formed into Parties, and *Herod* with his Body proceeded towards *Arabia*.

Antigonus, having by this Time, gained Poſſeſſion of the Government of *Judea*, through the Aſſiſtance of the King of *Parthia*, was greatly incenſed at the Eſcape of the Women, and the Loſs of the Money which he had promiſed as a reward to his Allies; ſo that in the Fury of his Reſentment, he ordered the Ears of *Hyrcanus* to be cut off, in Order to Diſqualify him for the dignified Order of the Prieſthood.

Phaſael, finding his Situation deſperate, and dreading the revenge of the Conqueror, put an End to his Life Riſe in a moſt extraordinary Manner; for being menacled, he daſhed out his Brains againſt the Priſon Wall.

Herod being arrived on the Borders of *Arabia*, applied to *Malichus*, the fearing

ing the Reſentment of the *Parthians*, not only denied his Requeſt, but forbid him by his Meſſengers even from entering his Dominions. Thus embarraſſed on all ſides, he betook himſelf to *Egypt*, where he was honourably received, and ſumptuouſly entertained by *Cleopatra*; But being determined on a Paſſage to *Rome*, from a view of obtaining the Favour and Intereſt of the Conquerors of the World, he ſet forward and after a tedious and dangerous Paſſage in the midſt of Winter, landed at *Brunduſium*, and from thence proceeded to *Rome*.

Being verſed in all the Arts of Inſinuation, and endued with great Eloquence, he repreſented his late Adventures in ſuch ſtriking Terms to *Anthony*, that the generous *Roman*, wrought upon by the affecting tale, and the remembrance of his father *Antipater*, not only eſpouſed his cauſe, but engaged *Cæſar* in his Intereſt, to the great Joy of the ambitious Suppliant.

The Caſe of *Herod* was ſoon after brought before the Senate, who in Conſequence of *Anthony*'s ſetting forth in a very elaborate manner, the Service he had done the Roman Common-Wealth; and repreſenting the Indignity they had ſuſtained from *Antigonus*, in accepting the Government from the Hands of the *Parthians*; pronounced *Herod* King of *Judea*, and declared *Antigonus* a profeſſed Enemy to the State.

When the Senate broke up, *Ceſar* and *Anthony* accompanied by a great Number of the Members, conducted *Herod* with the utmoſt Solemnity, to the Capital, where they ſacrificed with the uſual Solemnity, and depoſited the Decree, that had lately paſſed.

Anthony then entertained the King in the moſt ſumptuous Manner, and publicly congratulated him on the Honours which had been conferred upon him in ſo ſignal a Manner, by the moſt dignified People of the Univerſe.

CHAP. VI.

Herod's *Party diſtreſſed in* Maſſada. *He marches to their Aſſiſtance, reinforced by the Romans. Obtains very conſiderable Advantages by the Reduction of divers Places. Sets his Friends at Liberty. Encamps near* Jeruſalem. *Recovers* Galilee. *His Brother* Joſeph *thro' Inadvertence loſes his Life. Siege of* Jeruſalem *carried on with great Vigour on both Sides. Terminates in Favour of* Herod, *who cauſes* Antigonus *to be put to Death. Extinction of the Family of* Aſmodeus.

WHILE the Intereſt of *Herod* was ſo eſſentially promoted by the Concurrence of the Roman Senate, his Friends, who were blocked up in the Caſtle of *Maſſada*, were expoſed to great Hardſhips, thro' the Preſſure of *Antigonus*, and a great Dearth of Water, inſomuch that being on the Point of Surrender, *Joſeph* had conceived a Deſign for eſcaping

caping with his neareſt Relatives, and thoſe of the Party, who were moſt firmly attached to his Cauſe. But the Deſign was happily obviated, by a prodigious Shower of Rain, that fell on the very Night which they had propoſed for its Execution. Being thus ſupplied with Water, the beſieged made a moſt furious Sally, and repelled a Party of the Aſſailants with great Loſs.

Herod having received Intelligence at *Ptolemais*, whence he had lately arrived from *Rome*, of the Situation of his Friends, raiſed a conſiderable Army, amongſt whom was a Party of Romans, under the Command of *Ventidius* and *Silo*; determined to act with the utmoſt Vigour and Reſolution, in order to recover his Kingdom, as well as relieve his Friends.

Moſt of the *Galileans* joined him in his March, ſo that having reduced *Joppa*, he advanced to *Maſſada*, which having compelled to ſurrender, he ſet his Friends at Liberty; and after he added the Caſtle of *Reſſa* to his Conqueſts, proceeded to *Jeruſalem*, and encamped on the Weſt Side of that City.

Antigonus had taken every neceſſary Precaution for its Defence and Security; he had ſupplied it with a numerous Garriſon, well furniſhed with warlike Stores, ſo that having annoyed the Aſſailants by frequent Sallies, he became too confident of Succeſs, and ſent a Herald round the Walls, to proclaim Indemnity to all that would voluntarily ſurrender.

To enforce this Proclamation, he addreſſed himſelf from the Wall to *Silo*, and the Romans under his Command, repreſenting the Injuſtice they had done him in transferring the Crown from his Family, which was of royal Deſcent, to *Herod*, who was of a Plebeian Race; adding, that if they were diſpoſed to expreſs their Reſentment on Account of his receiving the Kingdom from the *Parthians*, they might nevertheleſs have conferred their Favours upon ſome Perſon of royal Extraction, as many yet remained, who had never given them any juſt cauſe for Diſpleaſure.

From theſe Reproaches, they came to Acts of Hoſtility, and the beſieged plied their Darts and Arrows with ſuch Rapidity, that the Enemy were ſoon driven from the Walls.

This ſucceſsful Effort was greatly promoted by the Treachery of *Silo*, who in Conſequence of a Bribe from *Antigonus*, inſinuated to the Soldiers of *Herod*, the Barrenneſs of the Country, the Inconvenience of their Quarters, and their Want of every neceſſary Accommodation, which diſpoſed them to wiſh for a Concluſion being put to the Siege.

Herod, having received intelligence of theſe Proceedings, reminded *Silo* in a perſuaſive Tone, that he was not only ſent by *Cæſar* and *Anthony*, but by the whole Senate of *Rome*; declaring at the ſame Time, that if he and his Soldiers would ſtand their Ground, they ſhould be plentifully ſupplied with all Things neceſſary.

Antigonus having Notice of all that paſſed, diſpatched Parties to lie in Ambuſcade, and intercept the Foragers;

gers; but *Herod*, who was equally active with the Enemy, very frequently came up with them, and purſued his Advantages with ſuch Vigour, that having extended his Victory as far as the River *Jordan*, all *Galilee* came over to his Allegiance.

Herod finding that notwithſtand- this Advantage, his Affairs were but inconſiderably promoted, as the Roman Guards acted with great Coolneſs in his Intereſt, determined to repair to *Anthony*, leaving his Brother *Joſeph* to watch the Motions of *Antigonus*.

Anthony received him, upon his arrival with every honourable Token, treated him in a Manner agreeable to his royal Character, and aſſured him, that Orders ſhould be immediately diſpatched to the Roman Generals, to exert themſelves with as much Vigour in his Cauſe, as if they were employed in the actual Service of the State.

During the Abſence of *Herod*, *Joſeph*, unmindful of his Inſtructions, marched toward *Jericho* with a Detachment, in order to forage; and his Party conſiſting of unexperienced Men, were circumvented by the diſciplined Troops of *Antigonus*, and together with their Leader, eaſily vanquiſhed.

Antigonus finding *Joſeph* among the dead Bodies, cauſed his Head to be cut off, and ſet the Price of fifty Talents for the Redemption for it, which were paid by his Brother *Pheroras*, and this occaſioned a Revolt of ſeveral of the *Galileans*.

Herod receiving Intelligence of the Death of his Brother, while he was at a Place called *Daphne*, haſtened to Mount *Libanus*, where taking eight Hundred of the Natives, and a Roman Legion, with him, he advanced to *Ptolemais*, and from thence paſſing by Night through *Galilee*, was beſet in his March, but repulſed the Enemy with conſiderable Loſs. By this Time above eighteen Months elapſed, ſince *Herod* upon the Honours conferred on him, had determined to recover the Government of *Judea*; conſidering therefore, that as long as *Jeruſalem* held out, his Poſſeſſion of other Places would be very precarious, he reſolved to turn his whole Force againſt the Capital, and by reducing that, put a final Period to the War, and eſtabliſh himſelf on the Throne, from which he had been expelled.

To accompliſh this important Deſign, he encamped before the Temple, which he encompaſſed with a triple Trench. His own Army conſiſted of about thirty Thouſand Men, to which were added, eleven Roman Legions of Foot, and ſix Thouſand Horſe, under the Command of *Soſius*, beſide the auxiliary Troops of *Syria*. The Jews within the City were reſolute and numerous, animating each other by exclaiming, *The Temple of the Lord! The Temple of the Lord!* and delivering ſuch Preſages, as with the Bleſſing of God, ſeemed to portend their ſpeedy Deliverance. In ſhort they exerted themſelves with amazing Vigour, and by furious Sallies, frequently repelled the Beſiegers.

Herod

Herod obſerving from their animated Conduct, that the Siege would be long and doubtful, unleſs he could prevent the Conveyance of Proviſions into the City, ſo diſpoſed his Troops as entirely to cut off all Communication. He then prepared his battering Engines, and bombarded the Walls; but the beſieged ſuſtained the Aſſault with incredible Reſolution, oppoſed Stratagem to Stratagem, and as ſoon as one Wall was thrown down, ſupplied it with a Retrenchment that ſerved for another. The Jews were at length much ſtreightened for want of Proviſions; but animated by Deſpair, determined to hold out to the very laſt Extremity,

At length being reduced to the loweſt Ebb, *Herod* entered the City, and the Jews retiring into the inner Temple, were purſued thither. A horrible Scene enſued, for the Romans, exaſperated at the obſtinate Defence which they made, and *Herod*'s Party determined on the Extirpation of the Faction, put all to the Sword, without Regard to Age, Sex, or Condition, ſo that the Streets reſounded with Cries, and Blood was ſpilt in every Corner.

Antigonus finding all Reſiſtance vain, determined to ſubmit, but not to *Herod*; therefore deſcending from a Tower, he caſt himſelf at the Feet of *Soſius* the Roman General; who inſtead of pitying, upbraided him with Puſillanimity, and committed him to the Cuſtody of a ſtrong Guard.

Herod being thus become Maſter of the City, thought it highly expedient to preſerve it from Plunder. But this he found extremely difficult, and he was obliged to have Recourſe to Intreaty, Threats, and at length Force, to reſtrain the People, and eſpecially the Mercenaries from ſeizing all that came within their Reach, and even rifling the Temple itſelf.

However he amply rewarded the Roman Soldiers, who together with *Soſius* their General departed from *Jeruſalem*, carrying *Antigonus* bound to *Anthony*. *Herod*, fearing that *Anthony* would not take away his Life, and that therefore he might lay his Claim to the Government before the Roman Senate; which, as he was of Royal Blood, and himſelf of *Plebeian*, might render the Iſſue extremely doubtful; by a private Meſſage, inſinuated to him the Neceſſity of taking off *Antigonus*.

The Roman was greatly inclined to preſerve his Royal Priſoner to grace his Triumph, but being wrought upon by Gold, (the moſt prevalent Argument in paſt Time, as well as the preſent) after he had briefly harangued on the Expediency of the Sentence, commanded him to be beheaded.

This Action reflects much Diſgrace upon the Memory of *Anthony*, as it was entirely without a Precedent, he being the firſt Roman General, that ſubjected a conquered Prince to ſuch unjuſt Treatment. Thus ended the Reign of the illuſtrious Family of *Aſmodeus*, which in a ſucceſſive Line had held the Government of *Judea*, during

during a hundred and twenty Years; but were at length rendered extinct by inteſtine Diſſention, which has ever proved deſtructive to all States, Families, and Societies, amongſt whom it has prevailed.

This memorable Event fell out upon the Day of a ſolemn Faſt, being the Anniverſary of this City's Deſtruction by *Pompey*, which happened exactly twenty-ſeven Years before this dreadful Cataſtrophe.

CHAP. VII.

Reſpect ſhewn to Hyrcanus *in his Captivity.* Herod *promotes a Perſon of mean Birth to the Pontificate, Depoſes him at the Inſtance of his Relations, and advances a Perſon of Dignity. Inſtances of the Cunning, Cruelty, Ambition, Perfidy, and Hypocriſy of* Herod. *His artful Behaviour towards* Anthony. *He joins him againſt* Cæſar Octavianus. *Overthrows the Arabians. A dreadful Earthquake in* Judea. *The Jews ſue for Peace, and the Arabians put their Ambaſſadors to Death.* Herod *encourages them, and compels the Arabians to ſubmit.*

DURING the important Tranſactions related in the foregoing Chapter, *Hyrcanus* the High Prieſt remained in Captivity with the *Parthians*, and was treated with the higheſt Honour and Eſteem by King *Phraates*, who not only releaſed him from his Irons, but allowed him the City of *Babylon* as the Bounds of his Confinement, where he was received by the Jews, who dwelt in that Part with all the Reverence due to his ſolemn Character.

Notwithſtanding his Situation was rendered thus agreeable through the Benevolence of the *Parthian* King, he diſcovered a fond Deſire for returning to his Native Country, vainly imagining that former Services would ſecure him the Favour of *Herod*. But his Friends, from the Reſpect they bore his Perſon, and the Suſpicion they entertained of the Jealouſy and Perfidy of the King of *Judea*, endeavoured by alledging his Incapacity for the pontifical Dignity through Mutilation, to divert the Hopes he ſo fondly cheriſhed; however he procured his Diſcharge from *Phraates*, and went to *Jeruſalem*, where he was received with ſingular Reſpect.

Hyrcanus being rendered incapable of the Office of High Prieſt, *Herod* began to deliberate with himſelf concerning the Choice of a Succeſſor, and from a Conſciouſneſs of his own low Extraction; fearing to advance a Perſon of Royal Deſcent, conferred that Dignity upon one *Hananel*, an obſcure Jewiſh Prieſt whom he brought from *Babylon*.

The Promotion of this mean Perſon greatly diſguſted *Alexandra* the Daughter of *Hyrcanus*, and Mother of *Ariſtobulus*, who reſenting the Contempt offered her Family, in ſetting her Son aſide and obtruding a Foreigner into the Pontificate, wrote to *Cleopatra* Queen of *Egypt*, to engage *Anthony* in her Cauſe, that the Honour might be conferred on her

her Son, who had undoubted Right to it.

Her Application ſucceeded to her utmoſt Wiſhes, for *Herod* hearing of the late Proceedure, at firſt affected Reſentment; but perſuaded of the Influence of the *Egyptian* Queen with the powerful Roman, a Reconciliation was ſoon effected between him and *Alexandra*, and followed by the Depoſition of *Hananel*, and the advancement of *Ariſtobulus* to the Pontificate.

But *Herod*'s Jealouſy of *Alexandra* would not permit the Continuance of the Reconciliation, for he grew ſo ſuſpicious of her, that he forbad her to concern herſelf with publick Affairs, confined her to the Court, and ſet Spies to watch even her domeſtic Oeconomy. Exaſperated at ſuch indign Treatment, ſhe again applied to *Cleopatra*, and having received an Invitation from that Princeſs, prepared for her Departure. To conceal her Deſign from *Herod*, ſhe had procured two Biers, in which the Servants were to carry them to the Sea Side, where a Veſſel lay ready to convey them to *Egypt*.

But this Stratagem miſcarried through the Treachery of a Servant, that communicated it to one *Sabbion*, who being ſuſpected of a Concern in the poiſoning of *Antipater*, *Herod*'s Father; in order to obviate that Diſgrace diſcloſed it to *Herod*. The King ſuffered them to paſs a little Way uninterrupted, and then ſurpriſed and brought them back; but fearing the Power and Influence of *Cleopatra*, who had eſpouſed their Intereſt, he ſuſpended his Reſentment, affected a Kindneſs for them, though at the ſame Time he meditated Revenge on *Ariſtobulus*, which he only waited an Opportunity to execute; nor was it long before it preſented itſelf.

At the Feaſt of the Tabernacles, *Ariſtobulus* was to officiate as High Prieſt; he was then in the eighteenth Year of his Age, of a comely Aſpect, elegant Form, and engaging Mien.

When he advanced toward the Altar, clad in the Pontifical Robes, to perform the Ceremonies, inſtituted by the Law, he diſcharged his Office with ſuch Grace, Dignity and Solemnity, as attracted the Admiration of the whole Aſſembly, and brought to their Minds the noble Acts of his royal Grandfather *Ariſtobulus*, whoſe Family they thought deſerved a better Condition than they now enjoyed.

The general Approbation of the Multitude increaſed the Envy and Jealouſy of *Herod*, and haſtened the Fate of the Royal Youth; for when the Feaſt of the Tabernacles broke up, the King deſired him to accompany him to an Entertainment at *Jericho*, where he conſulted a Stratagem and cauſed him to be drowned, as he was bathing in a Pool.

Thus was this delectable Youth taken off, thro' the execrable Fraud of a wicked King, who immediately reſtored his Creature *Hananel* to the pontifical Dignity.

Herod, to wipe off all Suſpicion of ſo foul a Deed, viſited *Alexandra*, pro-

profeſſed his Innocence, and to give his abominable Hypocriſy an Air of Sincerity, affected the moſt poignant Grief, and caſt forth Showers of Crocodile Tears; but his fraudulent Acts prevailed not with the diſconſolate Mother, who ſaw his Villainy thro' all the Guiſes he aſſumed.

The afflicted *Alexandra* again had Recourſe to *Cleopatra*, whom having acquainted with the treacherous Behaviour of *Herod*, and the untimely Death of her Son, the Queen determined to eſpouſe her Cauſe, and therefore ſollicited *Anthony* to revenge the Fate of *Ariſtobulus*.

Anthony, wrought upon by the Importunity of *Cleopatra*, repaired to *Laodicea*, and cited *Herod* to clear himſelf from the Imputation concerning the Death of *Ariſtobulus*.

Herod, too artful to rely on the Merits of his iniquitous Cauſe, and dreading the Influence of *Cleopatra*, who had incenſed *Anthony* againſt him, was greatly perplexed how to proceed at this critical Juncture; but Neceſſity ſoon dictated an Expedient. Perſuaded that it was vain to diſpute the Will of the powerful Roman, he appointed his Uncle *Joſeph* Regent, during his Abſence, and ſet out for *Laodicea*.

Having on former Occaſions experienced the prevailing Influence of Gold, he provided himſelf with a very conſiderable Sum, repaired with Confidence to *Anthony*, and by Means of an inſinuating Tongue, and that moſt eloquent Ore, wrought upon *Anthony*, who exculpated him from the Imputation, and gave him repeated Tokens of his Favour: nay, he even told *Cleopatra*, that it was beneath the Dignity of a King, to render an Account of his Conduct to any.

Herod having averted this Danger, and ſecured his Intereſt with *Anthony*, took his Leave and returned Home, where he trumpeted abroad the Honours that had been conferred on him, and extolled the generous *Roman* above all the Princes of the Earth.

Soon after this tranſaction, the *Roman* State was involved in civil Broils, through the Competitions between *Cæſar Octavianus* and *Anthony* for the ſole Poſſeſſion of Empire; ſo that *Herod* could not ſtand as an idle Spectator, after he had received ſo many ſignal favours from the latter.

Having therefore raiſed a very powerful Army, he marched at the Head of it to the Aſſiſtance of his Patron; but *Anthony* appointed him to proceed againſt the *Arabians* whom he deemed a falſe and faithleſs People.

In conſequence of this order, he marched back with his Army, and advanced into *Arabia* with a conſiderable Body of Horſe and Foot, and the Natives having Intelligence of his Motions were ready to encounter him. An Engagement enſued, and was maintained with great Fury on both Sides, till at length victory declared in Favour of the *Jews*.

Herod having now appeaſed his Enemies at Home, and ſecured his Intereſt abroad, returned to *Judea*, where he was received with Eſteem and Reſpect.

Soon

Soon after this Event, there happened in *Judea* a moſt dreadful Earthquake, which devoured a great Number of Cattle, and cauſed the deſtruction of above ten thouſand Perſons, who were buried in the Ruins of the Houſes that were thrown down. The *Arabians* availed themſelves of this Calamity that had befallen the *Jews*, for when the latter compelled by their Diſtreſſes ſent Ambaſſadors to ſue for Peace, they not only ſeized and put them to Death, but ſoon after advanced with an Army againſt the *Jews*.

This Change of Affairs greatly diſpirited the *Jews*, but *Herod* by an animated ſpeech diſpelled their Fears, revived their Courage, and they attacked them again, obtained a complete Victory, and forced them to put themſelves under his Protection.

CHAP. VIII.

Herod's *late Succeſs followed by the Defeat of* Anthony *his Patron at the Battle of* Actium. *Through Jealouſy, he cauſes the Death of* Hyrcanus. *Submiſſively applies to* Cæſar, *who now aſſumes the Surname of* Auguſtus. *Meets with a favourable Reception, and is confirmed in the Government of* Judea. *greatly perplexed by domeſtic Grievances in his Return. Attends* Cæſar *a ſecond Time. Procures the Death of* Mariamne. *His Horrors of Conſcience conſequent thereupon, is ſeized with a terrible Diſeaſe. Erects a moſt magnificent Temple on his Recovery, which is the laſt memorable Occurrence in the Hiſtory of the* Jews *previous to the Incarnation of the bleſſed* Jeſus.

THE late Victory highly gratified the ambitious *Herod*, but this Sunſhine of Proſperity was ſoon eclipſed by a Diſtaſter that had well nigh ruined all his Hopes; for *Anthony* having been defeated at the memorable Battle of *Actium*, by his Competitor, *Cæſar Octavianus*; he was under the moſt alarming Apprehenſions, leſt the Conqueror ſhould deprive him of his Kingdom, for having eſpouſed the Cauſe of *Anthony*.

This Conſideration excited his Jealouſy, and reflecting that *Hyrcanus* was living, and that he was the only one of the Blood royal, he determined to put an End at once to his Life, and his own Fears. While he was ruminating on this horrid Deſign, the very Family of *Hyrcanus* furniſhed him with an Opportunity of executing his Reſolution.

Alexandra Daughter of *Hyrcanus*, ſeeing her Father careleſs, and unconcerned at the Miſeries of his Family, repreſented to him the Diſgrace of ſuffering the Indignities, which *Herod* put upon them, and adviſed him to apply to *Malchus*, King of *Arabia*, who would not fail to aſſiſt him, adding that if *Cæſar* ſhould call *Herod* to Account for his former Friendſhip to *Anthony*, which might reaſonably be expected, the Crown would certainly devolve to him. *Hyrcanus* at firſt turned a deaf Ear to the Sollicitations of his Daughter, but her Importunity

portunity at length prevailed, and ſhe wrote Letters to *Malchus*, which he ſent by *Doſitheus*, whom he thought he had ſecured in his Intereſt; but the Traitor betrayed him to *Herod*.

The King, to render the Deſign of Herod more open to the World, enjoined *Doſitheus* to Silence, bad him carry the Letter to *Malchus*, who would not fail to give him an Anſwer, which when he had got, he ordered to be brought to him.

Doſitheus haſtened to *Malchus*; and having delivered *Hyrcanus*'s Letter, received an Anſwer, which he immediately brought back to *Herod*, who ſending for him, charged him with holding a Correſpondence with the King of *Arabia*; and upon his Denial, produced the Letter of *Malchus*. *Hyrcanus* being thus ſelf-condemned, he cauſed him to be put to Death in the eighty firſt Year of his Age.

Having thus obviated all Ground of Suſpicion on this Quarter, *Herod* prepared to wait on *Cæſar*, who with the Aſſent of the Senate and People of *Rome*, had aſſumed the Title of Emperor, and Surname of *Auguſtus*; the Form of Government having been legally changed, from a Republic into a Monarchy. Though he had no Ground to expect any Indulgence from the Emperor, he determined to apply to him: but leſt his Mother-in-law, *Alexandra*, might in his Abſence occaſion ſome Tumult, he committed the Care of the Government to his Brother *Pheroras*, and ſecured his Mother and Wife in ſuch a Manner as to prevent any Quarrels that might ariſe between them, as he knew they were actuated by a moſt implacable averſion to his Conduct.

After theſe neceſſary Precautions, he haſtened to *Rhodes* to meet *Auguſtus*, where, upon his Arrival, in due deference to the Emperor, he took up his Crown, and laid it aſide. He was received with great Courteſy, and emboldened thereby, frankly repreſented to *Cæſar*, that he had retained a Friendſhip for *Anthony*, aſſiſted him with Money and Proviſions, and was ready to ſacrifice his Life and Fortune in his Intereſt; but as the Face of Affairs was changed, he would ſerve him in as unfeigned and unreſerved a Manner as he had done the other.

This Addreſs, ſo conciſe and pertinent, wrought ſo effectually upon *Auguſtus*, that he deſired him to reſume his Crown, confirmed him in his Kingdom of *Judea*, and received him into his immediate Friendſhip, aſſuring him, that he ſhould hold him in equal Eſteem with *Anthony*, to whom he had done ſo many ſignal Services.

Having thus obtained the Favour and Intereſt of the greateſt Monarch upon Earth, he returned to *Judea*, loaded with Honour and Power, to the Aſtoniſhment of the People, who expected from this Interview a very different Turn of Affairs.

Herod now found that great diſorders prevailed in his Family, through the Inſtigation of his Wife and Mother, who were ſo incenſed at their

Confinement, that they reproached him to his Face, eſpecially *Mariamne*, who not only upbraided him with a cruel Deſign upon her Life, but affected the utmoſt Grief when he related to her the Succeſs of his Interview with *Cæſar*.

This Averſion tortured the Mind of *Herod*; Ambition dictated Revenge to puniſh the Woman's Pride; but Love interceded in her Behalf; Jealouſy and Love thus agitating his diſturbed Mind, his Hatred at length prevailed, and he had determined ſomething fatal againſt *Mariamne*, if an Accident had not prevented his Purpoſe.

Hearing of the Death of *Anthony* and *Cleopatra*, and that *Auguſtus* was poſſeſſed of all *Egypt*, he was obliged once more to attend him. Therefore committing the Care of his Family to *Sohemus*, and veſting him with the Government of Part of *Judea*, in his Abſence, he departed, and was honourably received by *Cæſar*, who conferred on him additional Favours, adding to his Kingdom ſeveral Places on the Continent as well as the Coaſt.

When he had waited upon *Cæſar* as far as *Antioch*, he returned to *Jeruſalem*, where having waſted a Year without being able to pacify his Queen, he determined to chaſtiſe her at the Expence of his own Peace. As he had no juſt Pretence for proceeding againſt her, his Siſter furniſhed him with an Accuſation to take her off, by bribing *Herod*'s Cupbearer, to tell him, that the Queen had corrupted him to poiſon him.

Upon this, *Herod* calling a Council of Friends only, accuſed her of a Deſign to take him off, and being now determined in his Revenge, upbraided her, in the vileſt Terms, to the general Diſapprobation of the Aſſembly.

After many Struggles between Conſcience and Paſſion, he commanded her to be put to Death, and the Queen received her Doom with all the Compoſure of conſcious Innocence, and with that intrepid Reſolution, which Virtue alone can inſpire, greatly ſubmitted to the fatal Stroke.

His very Soul was now poſſeſſed with all the Horrors of Guilt, he called upon her Name, but his Cruelty had deprived her of the Power of anſwering; his Griefs would admit of no Allay; the Purſuit of Glory ceaſed to be his Delight; he ſupinely neglected his Government, and was wholly abſorbed in his Sorrows. In vain did Friends invent Amuſements to divert him; all Senſe of Pleaſure was baniſhed, and nothing remained but ſad Deſpair.

While the King was in this State of Anxiety, a Peſtilence raged in *Jeruſalem*, which ſwept away Numbers of People of all Ranks and Degrees, and was looked upon as the juſt Judgment of God for the Murder of the innocent Queen.

The King, overwhelmed with Grief, went into Retirement, where in a few Days he was ſeized with a dangerous Diſorder, that baffled all the Art of his Phyſicians. In this Condition he languiſhed ſome Time, during which *Alexandra* attempted

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to poſſeſs herſelf of all the Fortreſſes of *Jeruſalem*, which when *Herod* heard, he commanded her to be put to Death.

When he recovered from this Diſtemper, he practiſed every Degree of Oppreſſion and Cruelty, that Ambition and Malice could poſſibly ſuggeſt, changed all the antient Laws and Cuſtoms of the Jewiſh Nation, for foreign Inventions and ridiculous Innovations, and, in ſhort, incurred the Ill-will and Contempt of the People of *Judea*.

During this Scene of Confuſion and Impiety, the Kingdom was afflicted with a Drought, Famine, and Peſtilence, which raged with unabated Violence a conſiderable Time; however, having obtained a Grant for the Exportation of Corn out of *Egypt*, it was equally diſtributed among the People, to their no ſmall Relief.

This Conduct of *Herod* in ſome Degree, reſtored his Character, and reconciled many of the People to his Perſon and Government.

When this Calamity was removed and he had recovered his Health, he rebuilt a City, and erected a Temple in it, which being dedicated to *Auguſtus*, he called *Cæſarea*. As he had performed many famous Exploits, he determined to erect a moſt magnificent Temple in *Jeruſalem*, in all Reſpects larger and more ſtately than the former. Accordingly, having by an elaborate Harangue, brought the People to conſent to the Undertaking of ſo arduous a Work, it was accompliſhed in about nine Years, and ſix Months, and dedicated with all the uſual Forms and Solemnities.

This is the laſt remarkable Occurrence in the Hiſtory of the Jews, previous to the Incarnation of the Bleſſed Jesus, except the extraordinary Appearance of the Angel *Gabriel* to *Zachariah* the Prieſt, and the Holy Virgin; the Particulars of which Circumſtances being related at large in our Introduction to the Life of Christ, are omitted in this Place.*

Such was the State of the Jews at this memorable Period of Time, which according to the beſt Chronologers, fell out in the Year of the World 4004; when *Auguſtus Cæſar* was Emperor of *Rome*, and *Herod* under the Roman State, had governed the Kingdom of *Judea*, about twenty-four Years.

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* As ſome of our Readers may not have ſeen the Particulars to which we refer, they are reminded, that they are circumſtantially related by the Evangeliſt St. Luke in his firſt Chapter, from which we learn that the Angel *Gabriel* who appeared to *Zacharias*, as he was executing the Duties of his Office in the Temple, and predicted the Birth of *John* the Baptiſt the Harbinger of our bleſſed Lord, likewiſe predicted to the bleſſed Virgin, the Incarnation of the Son of God.

THE HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK XI.

The LIFE of JOB, with Remarks Practical and Explanatory.

As the Account of Job *refers not to any particular Branch of the ſacred Hiſtory, and it was deemed moſt expedient to carry on the Relation with as great a Regard to the Connection of the reſpective Circumſtances as poſſible, we could not inſert it in the Order in which it ſtands in the Bible, without interrupting the regular Plan; and therefore preſume it moſt proper thus to preſent it to our Readers.*

VARIOUS have been the Conjectures of learned Men concerning the Perſon of *Job*, whom ſome ſuppoſe to have been deſcended from *Nahor*, the Son of *Terah*, and Brother of *Abraham*, while others derive his Origin from *Eſau*, imagining him to have been *Jobab*, his Great Grandſon. But the moſt probable Notion is, that he ſprung from *Abraham*, by *Kolwrah* his ſecond Wife; as he is ſaid to have the greateſt and moſt conſiderable Man for Opulence of all the Inhabitants of the Eaſt, into which Country *Abraham* ſent his Son by *Keturah*.

That *Job* lived before the Law, may be gathered from his offering burnt Offerings in the Land where he reſided; which Offerings were forbidden in any other Place, than that which the Land ſhould chuſe in ſome one of the Tribes of *Iſrael*. That he lived over *Jacob* is evident from the Character given him by God, *That there was none like him on Earth, for Uprightneſs and the Fear of God.*

Upon the Whole, though the preciſe Time of *Job*'s Birth cannot be aſ-

aſcertained; yet there is an almoſt general Concurrence amongſt Commentators, that he lived in the Time of the Bondage of the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*; ſome placing his Birth in the ſame Year in which *Jacob* went down into *Egypt*, and dating the Beginning of his Trials in the Year that *Joſeph* died, being the twenty-firſt of *Job*'s Life.

Nor are there fewer Opinions concerning the Time of Writing this Hiſtory; ſome affirming that it was written after the Death of *Moſes*, who by others is ſuppoſed to have been the Author of it. However, who was the Compiler is a Matter of no real Importance; the Book of *Job* gives the cleareſt and moſt extenſive View of patriarchal Religion. The reality of his Perſon, the Eminence of his Character, his Fortitude and Patience in very great afflictions, his preceding and ſubſequent Felicity are allowed by all Divines.

Some learned Men indeed, and amonſt the reſt *Grotius* and *Le Clerc*. imagine that this noble Performance was written about a thouſand Years after the Time in which Job lived, namely, in or near the period of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, alledging the frequent *Chaldaic* Expreſſions that occur in it, that ſome Paſſages are taken from the Pſalms, Proverbs and Eccleſiaſtes; that there are more than a hundred Words, partly *Syriac*, partly *Arabic*, that are not to be found in other Parts of Scripture; which are all Signs that the Author lived in the latter Time, when many Words borrowed from the Idioms of the neighbouring Nations were admitted into the *Hebrew*.

It is one Mark of the Simplicity of very ancient Times, that in the Inventory of *Job's* Eſtate, no mention is made of Money, but only of Oxen, Sheep, Camels, Aſſes, and Servants. *Grotius* likewiſe confeſſes, that there is no Mention in the Book of *Job* of any Law, or religious Rites, but ſuch as were traditional, nor of any Points of Hiſtory, nor any idolatrous Practices, but ſuch as were of the more ancient Times before the *Moſaic* Inſtitution.

Schultens, an Author verſed in the oriental Languages, affirms, that the Style of this Book hath all the marks of a moſt venerable and remote Antiquity. *Job* is alſo honourably mentioned with *Noah* and *Daniel*, Ezek. xiv. 12.—20. From theſe Remarks, it may not be unneceſſary previous to our Entrance on the Particulars of the Hiſtory, to obſerve,

1ſt. That he was as well as they, a Perſon of diſtinguiſhed Piety.

2d. That he was well known, and celebrated as ſuch amongſt the Jews, to whom *Ezekiel*'s Prophecy was directed.

3d That he muſt either have been of the Seed of *Iſrael*, or like *Noah*, of the patriarchal Times; otherwiſe the *Jews*, ſeparated from, and raiſed in ſpiritual Privileges above all other Nations, would never have propoſed to themſelves one of their Gentile, uncircumciſed Neighbours of whom they had a mean Opinion, as an Example of the greateſt Piety, nor have admitted his Hiſtory into

their Canon. If he was of the patriarchal times, he muſt have been at the diſtance of about a thouſand Years before *Ezekiel*.

Meer oral Tradition of ſuch a Perſon could not have ſubſiſted through ſo long a Space of Time without appearing at laſt, as uncertain, as fabulous. There muſt therefore have been ſome Hiſtory of *Job* in *Ezekiel*'s Time; no other Hiſtory, but that which we now have, and which has always had a Place in the *Hebrew* Code, was ever heard of or pretended; this muſt then have been generally known, and read as true and authentic, and conſequently muſt have been written near to the Age in which the Fact was tranſacted, and not in future Times when its Credibility would have been greatly diminiſhed.

In ſhort if we ſhould affirm, that the Book of *Job* is one of the oldeſt and nobleſt Books extant, we ſhould have the Vote of the beſt Critics, and the Frame of the Book would juſtify the Aſſertion.

Job was a Prince of the greateſt Eminence, Wealth, and Authority among the People of the Eaſt; his Stock was immenſe, conſiſting of ſeven thouſand Sheep, three thouſand Camels, five hundred Yokes of Oxen and five hundred She Aſſes. He had ſeven Sons and three Daughters, who inherited not the Virtues of their Father, being greatly addicted to ſenſual Pleaſure; for when they arrived at Years of Maturity, and were free from his immediate inſpection, they revelled in all the Exceſſes of Luxury and ſportive Delights.

When this Behaviour was made known to their pious Father; fearful that ſuch a Deviation from the Laws and Practices in which they had been educated would incur upon them the divine Wrath and Vengeance; he kindly exhorted them to purify themſelves by Repentance and the Performance of ſuch Ceremonies, as were then required; in order to prepare them to ſacrifice to their juſtly offended God; the good Man himſelf riſing early in the Morning, and offering Burnt-Offerings for them according to their Number.

The pious Care of *Job* obtained the Approbation of the Almighty, who expreſſed his eſteem of the ſame at a Time when the Sons of God, that is, the Angels came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, at which Time alſo Satan their Adverſary came among them, to ſeek an Opportunity of doing them Miſchief. The Almighty, to ſet forth *Job* as an exemplary Pattern of Righteouſneſs is repreſented as thus interrogating the great Enemy of Mankind. *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant* Job, *that there is none like him in the Earth, a Man exactly juſt, and one that feareth God and ſhunneth Evil?*" The malignant Fiend, unwilling to confeſs that *Job* ſerved God from a truly pious Principle, and arrogantly deſirous of inſinuating that his Obedience proceeded from a Motive of Self-intereſt, is deſcribed as preſumptuouſly replying. *Doth* Job *ſerve thee for nothing?*

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Haſt thou not incloſed him on all Sides, ſecured him, and all that he hath from the reach of Misfortune and Danger: but withdraw thy Protection, and ſuffer him to be afflicted with the Loſs of the vaſt Wealth thou haſt heaped upon him, and he will curſe thee to thy Face."

The omniſcient *Jehovah*, knowing the Integrity of his Servant, and that his Example might have a pious Effect upon others expoſed him to the fiery Trial. *Behold*, ſays he, *All that he hath is in thy Power, but preſume not to touch his Perſon.* The grand Foe to the preſent and future Happineſs of Mankind, who walketh about as a roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour; having obtained this Permiſſion ſet his accurſed Inſtruments to work and to tempt the good Man even unto Blaſphemy, attack him with a Train of complicated Miſeries, too great in all human Probability for human Nature to ſuſtain. He took an Opportunity to begin his Aſſault in the Day that his eldeſt Son was to entertain his Relations. He had inſtigated the *Sabeans*, a neighbouring People deſcended from *Sheba*, Grandſon of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, to make an Inroad upon *Job*'s Territories, which they did with ſuch Fury, that but one Servant eſcaped to bring the unhappy News to his Maſter, which he did in this Manner. *Thy Oxen were ploughing, and the Aſſes feeding by them, and the* Sabeans *fell upon them, and took them away, and they have put all thy Servants to the Sword, except myſelf.*" *Job* had not time to reflect with himſelf whether this might be the Effect of common Depredation, or a Judgment upon him for the Folly and Wickedneſs of his Children, before this Meſſenger was followed by another, who in the greateſt Conſternation informed him. *That the Fire of God was fallen from Heaven, and had burnt up his Sheep and his Servants, and conſumed them all, ſo that he alone was eſcaped to tell him.*

This Account was certainly very Shocking, and the Calamity coming from Heaven, might give it the Appearance of a more immediate Judgment than the former; but before *Job* could ruminate upon the dire Cauſe, a third Meſſenger haſtily acquainted him, *That the Chaldeans in three Parties had fallen upon the Camels, and carried them away, and put all his Servants to the Sword, except himſelf.*

Thus was *Job* ſtripped of all his Subſtance in one Day; and he who in the Morning was the wealthieſt Man in all the Eaſt, was, before Night, perhaps the moſt indigent Creature upon Earth.

The accurſed Fiend, however, finding this ſevere Stroke ineffectual to accompliſh his full Deſire upon righteous *Job*, determined to touch him in a more ſenſible Part, and to come as near him as the Bound preſcribed by the Almighty would permit.

This Prince of the Air therefore, raiſing a very great Storm, threw down the Houſe, where *Job*'s Children were regaling, and by that Means deſtroyed them all; and that the

the good Man might not have Time to digeſt his former Loſſes, before the laſt Meſſenger had made an End of relating to him the Loſs of his Camels, another arrived, and with horror related, *That as his Sons and Daughters were eating and drinking Wine in their eldeſt Brother's Houſe, there came a great Wind from the Wilderneſs, and ſmote the four Corners of the Houſe, and it fell upon the Inhabitants, and they were dead, while he himſelf alone eſcaped to tell him.*

This laſt Account touched the good Man in the tendereſt Part; the Death of his Children at one Stroke could not but affect him deeply, nor was the Manner of their Death leſs afflicting, conſidering that it happened at a Time when they were very unprepared for ſo awful an Event.

But theſe repeated and aggravated Calamities did not betray him into any Irregularity of Behaviour; the only Vent he gave to his Grief was rending his Mantle, the common token of Affliction and Sorrow in thoſe Eaſtern Countries and early Ages of the World; then deliberately following the other uſual Cuſtoms of mourning, he ſhaved his Head, and in humble Submiſſion fell upon the Ground and worſhipped.

His Miſery could not render him forgetful of his Duty, he therefore humbled himſelf under the divine Hand, without whoſe Permiſſion he well knew, none of theſe Misfortunes could have befallen him.

Thus to the great Diſappointment of the Enemy of Souls, righteous *Job* ſtood the Shock, and in devout Acknowledgment of his own Meanneſs cried out, *Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked ſhall I return, to the Earth, the common Womb and Mother of Mankind.*

Then in Reſignation and Thankfulneſs for what he had received at the Hand of God, though now deprived of all, he gives up all for loſt in this World, and ſays, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.*

The Patriarch's Virtue therefore ſhone forth through his Sufferings, which, great as they were, could not warp him from his Duty and Obedience to his great Creator. He well knew that it was but Juſt, that he who gave, ſhould have Power to reſume his Grant whenever he pleaſed, and therefore inſtead of curſing, as Satan had maliciouſly ſuggeſted he would, he bleſſed God for all his Diſpenſations, and proved the Falſity of Satan's preſumptuous Declaration.

But the reſtleſs Fury of the inveterate Fiend, would not ſuffer him to ſuſpend his Attacks; for when the Sons of God, or as before obſerved, the Angels again preſented themſelves, it pleaſed the Lord to ſignify to Satan, the inflexible Integrity of his Servant, who, though tried in the tendereſt Points, would not deviate from his Duty, or even repine at what he thought the Diſpenſation of a divine Providence.

His Piety in ſhort appears in the midſt of his Trials, and his Faith and Reſignation muſt be deemed moſt extraordinary. The old Deceiver however

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JOB *Tempted*, Job, Chap. 2. 9.

ever artfully and maliciouſly obſerved, That God had hitherto only permitted him to try him at a Diſtance, inſinuating, that if he might be allowed to touch his Perſon, he would ſtill blaſpheme.

The Omniſcient Being, knowing that theſe Exerciſes, though grievous to Fleſh and Blood, would redound to his Glory, and the real Benefit of his Servant, as well as determined to arm him with Patience to bear them, and in the End to recompence all his Sufferings with an extraordinary Reward, enlarged Satan's Commiſſion, but yet with a Limitation, *Behold he is in thy Power, but touch not his Life.*

The buſy Tempter, exulting in the Enlargement of his Power, perſuaded himſelf of the Poſſibility of overcoming *Job*'s Virtue, and therefore immediately fell upon him, while impreſſed with the Senſe of his late Loſſes, and afflicted him with Boils and Ulcers from Head to Foot.

Never was human Nature more diſguiſed than righteous *Job* in this Condition, his Body being covered with loathſome Excreſſences, not ariſing from a depraved Habit of Conſtitution, but inflicted by a malicious Policy, which raiſed them to the higheſt Extremity of Pain, in order, if poſſible, to compel him to ſwear and blaſpheme. Nor were his Pains ſhort and intermitting, but laſting and poignant, and to increaſe his Miſery, the loathſome Nature of his Diſtemper not only rendered him odious to himſelf, but to all others.

Thus was *Job*, though the greateſt Man in the Eaſt, of the ſtricteſt Religion and Virtue, the Patron of the Fatherleſs and Widow, the Admiration of the Good, and the Terror of the Vicious and Prophane, by the divine Permiſſion and the Malice of the Devil, at once reduced to the moſt indigent and deplorable Circumſtances, ſtript of all his Subſtance, bereaved of all his Children, ſeven Sons and three Daughters, and ſoon after ſeized with a moſt nauſeous and painful Diſeaſe from Head to Foot, which rendered him the moſt ſhocking Spectacle of Sorrow and Wretchedneſs.

The Country, ſo far as the Fame of his Religion and Grandeur had ſpread, could not but hear his melancholy Story with Wonder and Aſtoniſhment. The Religious might be inclined to conclude, that ſuch ſignal and ſudden Calamities could be no other than the Judgments of God upon a Man, who, under the Maſk of Piety, had veiled a Life of Prophaneneſs and Debauchery. The wicked doubtleſs triumphed in his Sufferings, as a Juſtification of their own corrupt Principles and Practice, and a Demonſtration of the Inſignificancy of the ſtricteſt Regard to God and his Worſhip.

His Relations and Acquaintance, ſtruck with Horror and Averſion to ſuch a deſpicable, vile, and abandoned Creature, would not own him. The Wife of his Boſom treated him with Unkindneſs and Neglect. The baſeſt of Men broke in upon him like a Legion of Fiends, made his Afflic-

tions their Sport, treated him with all Manner of Indignities, Calumnies and Slander, and even ſpared not to ſpit in his Face.

Scarce ever were the Feelings of the human Heart oppreſſed with ſuch a complicated Load of Grief; ſcarce ever was a Profeſſion of Religion ſo much expoſed to Cenſure, Reproach and Inſult.

In this Situation, as he was probably pouring out his Supplications to Heaven, his Wife ſpared not to reproach him with his prepoſterous Goodneſs, in Words to this Effect, *Will you bleſs God, when he is deſtroying you! Will you call upon him, and believe he is good, when he hath ruined your Eſtate and Family, and in Spite of all your Submiſſion is ſlaughtering your Body, and within a Stroke of your Life?*

But *Job* returned no other than a mild Anſwer, as became a good Man and an affectionate Huſband. *You ſpeak not like yourſelf, but as a Woman void of Underſtanding. Is it fit God ſhould always ſmile upon ſinful Creatures? Shall we ſay, he is not juſt when he brings us into Affliction? We receive what pleaſeth us with Joy, and it is but reaſonable that we receive what is ungrateful with Compoſure and Reſignation; ſeeing both come from the ſame wiſe and ſovereign Diſpoſer of all Events.*

Thus did the Almighty preſerve and ſupport this eminent Servant under the Loſs of his Eſtate and Children, under the Extremity of his Pains, the Deſertion of his Friends and Relations, the Neglect of his Servants, and the Provocation of his Wife.

The Steadineſs of *Job*'s Mind was more ſeverely tried by his three Friends, *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, *Bildad* the *Shuhite*, and *Zophar* the *Naamathite*, Men of the ſame Rank and Piety, who dwelt in ſome of the adjacent Provinces, and in whoſe Familiarity he had probably been long happy.

The Report of his Sufferings, of the Ruin of his Character, and the Wound thereby given to Religion, having reached their Ears, they agreed with a ſincere Intention to join their Endeavours in adminiſtering the only Advice and Conſolation, they apprehended his Caſe would admit; for as their Suſpicions were ſtrong, and his Calamities carried evident Marks of divine Inflictions, they had the ſame Opinion of them with the reſt of the World, and believed they were the juſt Judgments of God upon an Hypocrite, they determined by all Means to fix a Senſe of Guilt upon his Conſcience, in order to bring him to true Repentance, and ſo to a ſolid Intereſt in the divine Favour and Bleſſing.

But when they were come, and had found their late flouriſhing, honourable and highly eſteemed Friend, reduced to the State of a moſt loathſome and miſerable Wretch, that was ſitting among Aſhes, they were aſtoniſhed beyond Expreſſion, and being confirmed in their evil Suſpicions, though they ſat with him on the

the Ground; yet as their bad Opinion of him would not allow them to ſay any Thing comfortable and encouraging, they kept Silence for ſeveral Days.

The Sight of his old Acquaintance, and their unfavourable Manner of Condolence, raiſed his Paſſion of Sorrow to ſuch a Pitch, that it burſt out into a Torrent of the moſt bitter Reflections on the Day of his Birth, wiſhing it had been ſtruck out of the Number of Days, or render'd as odious and deteſtable to all others, as it was to himſelf.

Upon this, *Eliphaz*, probably the oldeſt and moſt honourable of the three, addreſſed himſelf to *Job*, and in the ſofteſt Manner opened their Senſe of his Caſe; namely, that in their Apprehenſions of his Caſe, he had been very defective in the Character to which he had pretended; that great Sufferings muſt be the Puniſhment of great Sins; and that they could recommend him to no other Method of regaining his former Peace and Proſperity, than Repentance and ſeeking unto God for Pardon. In ſhort they plainly declared, that they judged he had been a very wicked Man, and that his Calamities were an evident Indication of the Divine Wrath againſt him as ſuch, endeavouring by that Means to extort a Confeſſion of Guilt from him.

But the pious though afflicted Patriarch immoveable in his Sincerity to God, and Innocence to Man, flatly denied their Inſinuations, and this produced a Diſpute between him and his Friends, which as is common in ſuch Caſes, was carried on with a growing Warmth and Eagerneſs on both Sides; and on both Sides might occaſion ſome Expreſſions too ſtrong and exaggerating.

His Friends argued from Experience, and what they had obſerved to be the uſual Method of divine Providence, they had ſeen many Inſtances of wicked Men, or of thoſe who had paſſed for ſuch, remarkably puniſhed, and hence they had formed to themſelves a general Maxim, that where they ſaw great Wretchedneſs and the acuteſt Sufferings, there muſt be Crimes proportionably great.

To this *Job* oppoſed, likewiſe Obſervation and Experience; and ſhewed, that the Rule of judging they had formed to themſelves, was by no Means right or without Exception, obſerving that good Men were ſometimes afflicted, and the Wicked flouriſhing and happy; and that for the moſt Part the good Things of this Life were dealt out promiſcuouſly; that this was more eſpecially the Caſe in Times of War and Peſtilence, and ſuch other Calamities, where the Good and Bad fell undiſtinguiſhed. To all this he added, that it was a very heavy Aggravation of his Miſery, to hear his Friends, ſo well acquainted with him, Perſons of Senſe and Diſtinction, charge him with Crimes which his Soul abhorred, and of which, God who had afflicted him knew that he was innocent.

To him he was ready to appeal, and ſtill adhere in Life and Death, though he did not know why he had dealt

dealt ſo ſeverely with him. So ſtrongly did *Job* aſſert his Integrity, that his Friends, though perhaps not convinced, were however put to ſilence.

During this Argument between *Job* and his Friends, there was preſent one *Elihu*, a young Man of good Underſtanding who acted as Moderator between them, and cenſured both Parties very freely and judiciouſly. He charged *Job* with no Crime as the Cauſe of his Afflictions, but ſeemed to think he had not managed the Diſpute about them, with ſo much Calmneſs and Submiſſion to God as became his Piety. He alſo endeavoured to convince him by Argument drawn from God's unlimited Sovereignity and unſearchable Wiſdom, that it is not inconſiſtent with his Juſtice to lay his afflicting Hand upon the beſt and moſt righteous of Men; adding that it was the Duty of all Men to bear ſuch Exerciſes, when any befal them, without murmuring or repining, and to acknowledge the Juſtice of God therein.

Job heard all this with great Attention, but made no reply, probably leſt he might be drawn to utter ſome unguarded Expreſſion, which the hard Treatment of his three Friends might have extorted from him.

When they were all ſilent, the Lord himſelf took up the Matter, and out of the Whirlwind directed his Speech to *Job*, wherein after the moſt ſtriking Diſpoſition of the Works of the Creation, he effectually convinced *Job* of his own Weakneſs and Inability of himſelf to underſtand the Ways and Deſigns of his myſterious Providence.

This Speech of the Deity, contained in Ch. 38, 39, 40, 41. moſt inimitably grand and ſublime, repreſenting the vaſt Extent of the divine Wiſdom and Power in the Formation of the Univerſe, ſhews,

1ſt. That all Things in the Sky, the Air, the Earth, and the Sea, are produced and diſpoſed in a Manner far beyond the Reach of Human Reaſon, Wiſdom, or Power.

2d. As a Conſequence that Man is not qualified to diſpoſe of himſelf. or of any other Being, That God may have wiſe and good Reaſons for his Ways, Works, and Dealings with us, which we cannot comprehend; and therefore it is our Duty, in all Caſes to acquieſce and ſubmit.

3d. That he who has given various Natures and Inſtincts to Animals, can give Being and Life, when and where, and in what Degree he pleaſes.

4th. That he is preſent to care for, ſuſtain and direct every living thing, and therefore that we ought to truſt in him for a happy Iſſue out of any of his Inflictions.

5th. That the wiſeſt of Men ſhould be very cautions and modeſt in cenſuring the Ways of Providence.

Theſe ſalutary Effects ſeem to have been produced in holy *Job* in a moſt remarkable Degree, nor can any Thing diſplay a genuine Humility more forcibly than his addreſs, *Behold! I am vile and contemptible in Compariſon of thee. What ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my Hand upon*

on

on my Mouth. Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer: Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.

He then proceeded to a more ample Confeſſion of the Supremacy, Power and Wiſdom of God, to this Effect. *I know thou canſt do every Thing; and that no Thought can be hid from thee. Well mighteſt thou aſk, Who he was that darkened Counſel by Words without Knowledge? I am ſenſible, I have uttered what I underſtood not, Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. But henceforward I deſire to learn of thee; therefore hear I beſeech thee when I ſpeak, and declare unto me what I aſk. I have heard of thee before, by the hearing of the Ear (which gave me but a diſtant Knowledge of thee) but now I have obtained a more clear and certain Apprehenſion of thee, for mine Eyes have ſeen thee; wherefore I reprove myſelf for what I have done amiſs, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes.*

This free and humble Acknowledgment of *Job* was ſo pleaſing in the Sight of God, that he graciouſly condeſcended to declare himſelf in his Favour againſt his Friends, who by their hard Cenſures and bitter Reflections, inſtead of being his Comforters, had proved his Tormentors.

The Addreſs of Deity was to this Effect, as particularly directed to *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*. *My Warmth is kindled againſt thee, and thy two Friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the Thing that is right, as my Servant* Job *hath. Therefore now take ſeven Bullocks, and ſeven Rams, and go to my Servant* Job, *and offer up for yourſelves a Burnt-Offering; and my Servant* Job *ſhall pray for you; for his Prayers will I accept; leſt I deal with you as you deſerve, for not ſpeaking the Truth, as my Servant Job doth.*

His Friends alarmed at the Menaces of an offended God, with all haſte prepared a Sacrifice to appeaſe the Divine Vengeance; and when it was preſented, God was pleaſed to accept *Job*'s Interceſſions for them.

After this, God was pleaſed to conſider the afflicted State of his Servant, and to reward his Faith and Piety with a more ample Fortune than he poſſeſſed before his ſevere Trials, doubling his former Stock in every Reſpect, excepting that of his Children; for he had fourteen thouſand Sheep, ſix thouſand Camels, a thouſand Yoke of Oxen, and a thouſand ſhe Aſſes.

He had alſo ſeven robuſt Sons, who with three beautiful Daughters graced his Table every Day, and received an extenſive Inheritance among their Brethren.

No ſooner was the Fame of *Job*'s Recovery, and the Reſtoration and Addition of his Fortune ſpread abroad, but his Friends and Acquaintance, from all Parts, came to congratulate him upon this happy Change of Circumſtances. Nor did they come empty handed; for every one brought him a valuable Preſent; and to make his terreſtrial Happineſs ſtill greater, God bleſſed him with a Prolongation of Life beyond the common extent of thoſe Times; for he lived an hundred and forty Years, after his

being reſtored, which made his Age above two hundred Years, ſo that he ſaw an Increaſe of his Family to the fourth Generation, and expired with the utmoſt Compoſure and Reſignation, not doubting of being made a partaker of the Inheritance of the Faithful.

REMARKS Practical and Explanatory on the Caſe and Character of JOB.

THE Inſtructions particularly deſigned in the Book of *Job* might not be ſo well underſtood in that Age of the World; namely, that great Sufferings are not always an Argument of great Sins, but that very good Men may be very much afflicted in this World; that therefore we ſhould not cenſure any under Calamities, be the Hand of God ever ſo apparent, unleſs the Crime be likewiſe certain and apparent. That we ought not to complain of God in any Condition, but meekly ſubmit to his bleſſed Will, who never doth any Thing without Reaſon, though we cannot always apprehend it, adoring and receiving the unſearchable Depths of his wiſe Counſels, and believing that all will at the laſt turn to our Advantage, if like his Servant *Job*, we perſevere in Faith, Hope and Patience.

This was *Job*'s real Character, tho' not without Errors. No Error can be diſcovered in his Behaviour, but thoſe to which he was provoked by the uncharitable Cenſure of his Friends. Thus he was put upon too frequent and too ſtrong Juſtifications of himſelf, being withal extremely perplexed to give a plain and ſatisfactory Account, why God afflicted him ſo ſeverely.

God in the Iſſue, ſatisfied him that he had great and weighty Reaſons; and in particular by doubling his Proſperity, that he deſigned to make him a Pattern of Patience and Reward. Whence we may learn, that under the ſevereſt Viſitations, the Lord is very compaſſionate and merciful to the ſincere and upright Soul, and will amply recompence in a future State.

Thus the great Point in Religion, before dark and doubtful, relative to the Providence of God, and the Sufferings of good Men, is cleared up with ſuch Evidence, as can no where elſe be found, but in the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

Though this Point might not be ſo well underſtood, before it was thus illuſtrated, yet there are ſeveral important Articles of Religion of which

Job

Job and his Friends, and doubtleſs many others, had very juſt and clear Conceptions; as the Being and Perfections of God; that we receive all from him, the Author of our Being, and Diſpoſer of all Events; that he ſees and orders all Things in Heaven and Earth; that there can be no Iniquity with him; that he is the Friend and Patron of Virtue, and hates, and will puniſh Vice and Wickedneſs; nevertheleſs, that he is merciful and gracious, and will certainly pardon and bleſs thoſe who ſincerely repent of their Sins, and return unto him: that he is to be ſupremely reverenced and worſhipped, as the ſole Sovereign of the Univerſe, by Prayers and Sacrifices, by purity and integrity of Heart, by Juſtice in all our Dealings, by all acts of Charity, Goodneſs and Benevolence to others, particularly to the Helpleſs and Indigent; by Temperance and Sobriety, curbing irregular Deſires and Appetites; that Men ſhould not be elated and puffed up by large Poſſeſſions, nor put their Truſt in riches; that they ſhould avoid Idolatry; that they ſhould not wiſh Evil to an Enemy, nor rejoice in his Misfortunes, much leſs think of murdering him; that they ſhould abſtain from Adultery and Fornication, from Theft, Rapine, and Deceit; for the Puniſhment of which Crimes he mentions Judges in his Days, and was himſelf one of the Chief.

Theſe and ſuch like Principles are allowed, both by *Job* and his Friends, and therefore were the Religion of the Patriarchs, as indeed they are the Principles of true and acceptable Religion in all Ages and Parts of the World.

Further, we may venture to affirm, that the Religious in the preceding as well as ſubſequent Ages, entertained the Faith and Hope of a future State. This has been the peculiar Belief of all Nations, from Time immemorial; and it is ſcarce credible in the Nature of the Thing, that the greateſt Happineſs of this Life, which might at any uncertain Time, and at length, would infallibly and totally be demoliſhed by Death, ſhould ever become a ſolid Principle of Religion, conſidered as the ſole Reward of Piety and Virtue.

However, it appears, that *Job* expected a future World, for he had Hope with Regard to his Condition, but not in this World; therefore his Hope muſt be in a future State. As he abſolutely deſpaired of any temporal Deliverance; the Hope he entertained of his Innocence being cleared, muſt certainly refer to the Day of Judgment.

He had moreover a notion of the Reſurrection, as appears from Chap. xiv. ver. 12. *So Man lieth down, and riſeth not, till the Heavens be no more, they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their Sleep.* — *ver.* 14. *If a Man die, ſhall he live again? Or ſhall a Man live again after he is dead? Then I will patiently wait all the Days of the Time thou ſhalt be pleaſed to appoint, till my happy Renovation ſhall come.*

If

If according to *Job*'s Expreſſion, after his Skin, his Body alſo was deſtroyed; How could he outlive this Deſtruction, ſo as to be a Man proſperous and happy again in this World? Had this been his fixed Belief, his frequent wiſhing for Death, would be utterly unaccountable, his tragical Complaints ridiculous, and his Deſpair of Health and Happineſs in this World, a palpable Contradiction.

Upon the whole, if we ſet aſide the Doctrine of a future State, we muſt allow, that *Job*'s Friends ſpoke more worthily of God, by vindicating his Providence in the exact Diſtribution of Good and Evil in this Life, and that *Job*, who aſſerted the contrary, miſrepreſented his Dealings with Mankind; but as the Approbation of an All-wiſe Judge has been pronounced upon the latter, thoſe who regard the Words of eternal Truth, need no other Demonſtration of the Certainty of a future State of Reward and Puniſhment.

It is therefore preſumed, that we have rendered it evident, beyond a Doubt, by theſe Strictures on the Book of *Job*, that in the Patriarchal Age, there were Perſons eminent for Piety and Virtue, who worſhipped the living God, and enjoyed extraordinary Communications from him; but that many were of a different Character, wicked and ungodly Men, and that Idolatry, captivating the Minds of the ignorant, weak and vicious, ſpread ſo faſt, that it threatened the total Deſtruction of the Knowledge and pure Worſhip of God.

Theſe inſtances may ſatisfy us, that although Life and Immortality are brought into the fulleſt Light by the Goſpel; a future State was not unknown from the beginning, to the coming of the ever bleſſed Redeemer of the World. So that we may take it for a good Rule, that the Words *Life* and *Salvation*, in the Old Teſtament, may be underſtood of a *future Life and Salvation*, when the Context will admit of ſuch an Interpretation.

As the Book of *Job* is fraught with peculiar Expreſſions, and has therefore afforded great Scope for the Jeſt and Ridicule of Infidels, it may not be unneceſſary, nor impertinent on this Occaſion, humbly to offer ſome Conſiderations that may direct the devout Believer in the Underſtanding of it.

1ſt. He that would rightly explain and fully comprehend this Book, muſt, as much as poſſible, imagine himſelf in the ſame diſtreſſed, afflicted Condition.

2d. It muſt be obſerved to reconcile every Circumſtance, that though every daring Thought or ardent Expreſſion, which occurs in the Speeches of this afflicted and exaſperated Man, is not to be vindicated; yet as he was a great Man and a Prince, he may be allowed to uſe bold and animated Language.

3d. We ſhall certainly judge amiſs if we think every thing wrong, which will not ſuit with the Politeneſs of our

our Manners, and the prevailing Mode of Expreſſion with us.

4th. In judging of the Character of *Job*, we muſt ſet the noble Strains of his Piety againſt the unguarded Expreſſions of his Sorrow, and remember, that he inſiſts not only on his Innocence, but on his Sincerity.

5. We muſt obſerve, that when his Friends encouraged him to hope for a temporal Deliverance; *Job* deſpaired of it, and expected his bodily Diſorder would terminate in Death: Though in the increaſing Heat of the Diſpute, they ſeem to drop this Sentiment in their following Anſwers, as if they ſuppoſed *Job* to be too bad for any Favour from God; the good Man however hoped, that his Character would be cleared in the Day of Judgment, though he was greatly concerned it could not be cleared before.

6. It alſo is worthy our Obſervation, that after a Life led in the moſt conſcientious Performance of the divine Commands, his Reputation ſhould ſink in the Opinion of his neareſt Friends; and his Sufferings excite the Reproaches of the Ignorant and Prophane upon his religious Profeſſion. Theſe Conſiderations touched him to the Heart; exaſperated all his Sufferings, and cauſed him often to wiſh, that God would bring him to his Trial here, in this Life, that his Integrity might be vindicated, and all Friends and Enemies might underſtand the true End and Deſign of his Suffering, ſo that the Honour of Religion might be ſecured.

7. In order to reconcile ſome Paſſages which appear daring and preſumptuous in mortal Man, we muſt remember, that as he could only affirm his Integrity, but could give no ſpecial ſatisfactory Reaſon, why God ſhould afflict him in a Manner ſo very extraordinary, and beyond all preceding Caſes, that were ever known in the World; it very much perplexed and embarraſſed his Mind, and laid him under great Diſadvantage in the Diſpute. It is on their Account that we find him ſo deſirous of coming to a Conference as it were with his Maker, to know his Mind and Meaning. Chap. xii. ver. 2. *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* The Whole 23d Chapter relates to this Point, in which he wiſhes he could come to the Dwelling Place of God, (ver 3.) and ſpread his Caſe before him, and argue it at large, (ver. 4.) for he had turned his Thoughts every Way and could make nothing of it, (ver. 8, 9,) only he was ſure God knew he was an upright Man, (ver. 10, 11, 12.) but (ver 13.) he, that is, God is in one, ſupreme above all others, abſolutely entire, keeping his Mind and Deſign to himſelf, and none can turn or oblige him to alter his Reſolution. All that we can ſay is, that he doth whatever is agreeable to his own Wiſdom, for (ver. 14.) what he hath reſolved to inflict upon me, he hath accompliſhed, and many ſuch Things he doth of which he will not aſſign to

Man the Reaſon. To the ſame Purpoſe are we to underſtand this Expreſſion, Chap. xxviii. 2. *He hath taken away my Judgment*, that is, the Rule by which I judge of my Afflictions. This Point, in Reference to God, *Elihu* tells him, Chap. 33, 13. he had urged to no Purpoſe, *ſeeing he gives no Account of his Matters*, or will not reveal to us the Secrets of his Providence.

8. In ſuch a noble Performance, as this Book has been allowed by the moſt learned and pious Men in all Ages; if any Thing ſeems inconſiſtent or uncharacteriſtical, we ſhould rather ſuſpect our own Judgment, and attribute the Fault not to the Writer, but our Underſtanding, remembering, that ſuch Senſe beſt agrees with the Subject or Point in Hand, which ſtands in the beſt Connection with the Context.

Having thus treated largely, and we humbly hope faithfully, on this much controverted Book, we ſubmit our Opinion to the Judgment of the ſerious Reader, and can only add, that if our Endeavours in this Point, ſhall tend to edify one Believer in his moſt holy Faith, reſpecting the infallible Word of the ever bleſſed God; we ſhall not deem our Work of Labour and Love in vain in the Lord.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

TO THE

HISTORY of the HOLY BIBLE,

BOOK XII.

CONTAINING an Account of the Writers and Subjects of the ſeveral Books in the Old Teſtament; a brief View of the Jewiſh ritual or ceremonial Law; Demonſtration of the Fulfillment of many Prophecies relative to the Perſon, Coming, and Offices of the *Meſſiah*; the Connection of the Old and New Teſtament, or Harmony and Agreement of the ſacred Writers. Excellency of the Scriptures, with a practical Concluſion.

CHAP. I.

Of the Writers and Subjects of the ſeveral Books in the Old Teſtament, from the Pentateuch to the Prophecies.

The PENTATEUCH.

THAT *Moſes* wrote the *Pentateuch*, or five-fold Volume, containing the five firſt Books in the Bible, we have the ſame Reaſon to believe, as we have that *Homer* wrote the Iliad; namely, the Conſent of all the Learned in all Ages.

The firſt of theſe Books is *Geneſis*, containing the only Hiſtory of the World from the Creation, down to *Jacob*'s removing into *Egypt* for two Thouſand nine Hundred and Ninety-eight Years.

2. *Exodus*, which is the Hiſtory of the Departure of the Iſraelites out of *Egypt*, and of the erecting and furniſhing of the Tabernacle.

3. *Leviticus*, in which are the Laws, Ceremonies, and Sacrifices of the Jewiſh Religion, and what particularly related to the Levites.

4. *Numbers*, begins with the numbering of the Iſraelites, after which ſeveral Laws and remarkable Events are recorded.

5. *Deute-*

5. *Deuteronomy* is a Repetition and an Abridgment of the Law, with Exhortations and Motives to enfore the Obſervance of it.

The Book of Joshua.

Joſhua probably wrote the laſt Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, and the Book of *Joſhua*, containing an Account of his own Acts, in conquering and dividing the Land of *Canaan*; and *Phineas* the High Prieſt might add the five laſt Verſes relating to the Death of *Joſhua*, and of his Father *Eleazer* the High Prieſt.

The Book of Judges.

This Book was certainly written before the ſecond Book of *Samuel*; compare 2 *Sam.* xi. 21. with *Jud.* xi. 53. and before *David* had taken *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Sam.* v. 6. *Jud.* i. 21. *Samuel* the Prophet or *Seer*, the laſt of the Judges was an Hiſtorian, *Chron.* xxix. 29. and probably wrote the Book of Judges. In it we read the great Efficacy of Religion to make a Nation happy, and the dreadful Calamities which Impiety brings on its Votaries.

The Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* points out ſome Examples of heroic and ſurpriſingly ſucceſsful Faith in *Gideon*, *Barak*, *Samſon*, and *Jephthah*, whoſe Hiſtory is recorded in this Book. It conſiſts of two Parts, the one containing the Hiſtory of the Judges from *Othniel* to *Samuel*, which Part ends with the ſixteenth Chapter; the other recounting ſeveral memorable Actions, performed not long after the Death of *Joſhua*, is thrown to the End of the Book, that it might not interrupt the Thread of the Hiſtory.

The Book of Ruth.

Ruth may be conſidered as an Appendix to the Book of *Judges*, and brings down the Hiſtory to the Times of *Samuel*, who probably was the Author of it, and draws the Lineage of *Judah* down to *David*, Chap. iv. v. 18. &c. which renders it not unlikely that it was written after *David* was anointed by *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 13.

Here it may not be improper to obſerve, that *Samuel* was not only an Author: but otherwiſe ſeems to have been a great Promoter of Literature and Religion. We never read of the Companies, or Colleges of Prophets till this Time, and therefore it is by no Means improbable that he erected them. They were Seminaries for the Inſtruction of Youth, in the Knowledge of the Law, and for training them up in the Exerciſes of Piety; particularly in the ſinging of ſacred Hymns, in Concert with the inſtrumental Muſick.

This in the Language of thoſe Times was propheſying, 1 *Sam.* x. 5. 1 *Chron.* i. 2, 3, 7. They were not ſtrictly ſpeaking all of them Prophets, but upon ſome of them God beſtowed the Spirit of Prophecy, or of predicting future Events, 2 *Kings* ii. 3. And we may reaſonable ſuppoſe that moſt of the Prophets properly ſo called, came out of thoſe Schools.

Amos

Amos exepts himſelf, Chap. vii. 14. *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophet's Son*, that is Diſciple; for the Scholars were called, *the Sons of the Prophets*. As their Head or Governor, they had ſome venerable, truly inſpired Prophet who was called their Father. *Samuel* was one, and perhaps the firſt of thoſe Fathers or Governors, 1 *Sam.* xix. 20. *Elijah* was another, 2 Kings ii. 12. *Eliſha* came to *Gilgal—and the Sons of the Prophets were ſitting before him.* The Maſter or *Father* ſat above, and the Scholars below before him at his Feet, 2 Kings ii. 3. *Knoweſt thou that the Lord will take away thy Maſter from thy Head?* or from the Seat where he ſat above thy Head. See *Acts* xxii. 3.

They lived together in Society, 2 *Kings* vi. 1. and when they had finiſhed their Lectures, and religious Exerciſes, were wont to eat together with their Maſters, 2 *Kings* iv. 38.

This Inſtitution had a manifeſt Tendency to advance Religon and Learning.

I. II. Samuel.

The firſt Book of *Samuel* was written before the firſt of Kings, and it is not unreaſonably ſuppoſed, that *Samuel* wrote the firſt twenty-four Chapters; and that after his Death, the Hiſtory of *David* was continued in the firſt and ſecond Books of *Samuel*, by the Prophets *Gad* and *Nathan*, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 29.

I. II. Kings.

Theſe Books contain the Hiſtory of the Kings of *Judah* of *Iſrael*, from *Solomon* to the Captivity in *Babylon* for the Space of four hundred and twenty three Years.

In this Period were ſeveral Hiſtorians; for we read of the Book of the Acts of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* xi. 14. which Acts of *Solomon* were recorded in the Book of *Nathan* the Prophet, and in the Prophecy of *Ahijah* the *Shilonite*, and in the Viſions of *Iddo* the Seer, 2 *Chron.* ix. 29.

This *Iddo* was employ'd together with *Shemaiah* the Prophet in writing the Acts of *Rehoboam*, 2 *Chron.* xii. 15. We alſo read of the Book of *Jehu* the Prophet relating to the Acts of King *Jehoſhaphat*, 2 *Chron.* xx. 34. And *Iſaiah* the Prophet wrote the Acts of King *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 22. And alſo of King *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 32.

It is alſo highly probable, that he wrote the Hiſtory of the intermediate Kings *Jotham* and *Ahaz*, in whoſe Reigns he lived, *Iſaiah* i. 1. And we may well ſuppoſe, that all theſe Hiſtories added together make the two Books of Kings.

Obſerve———No Writer of the Hiſtory of the Kings of *Judah* and *Iſrael* is any where expreſly named, but his Title is either given him as a Prophet, or it appears from ſome other Part of Scripture, that he was a Prophet. This Quality of the Writer was given to draw from us a proportionable Reſpect, and induce us to receive the Hiſtory with that Reverence which is its Due.

The Prophets were the Jewiſh Hiſtorians; therefore to the Hiſtori-

cal Books, *Joſhua*, *Judges*, 1. 2. *Samuel*, 1. 2. *Kings*, they give the Title of the *former Prophets*, as they gave the Title of the *latter Prophets* to *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *&c. &c.*

The Book of Psalms.

This Book was compoſed by ſeveveral Authors, but chiefly by King *David*.

Moſes compoſed the ninetieth Pſalm, when God had ſhortened the Lives of the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs as a Puniſhment for their Unbelief.

The hundred and thirty ſeventh Pſalm was indited ſoon after their Tranſportation to the Land of *Babylon*, and Captivity there; and the hundred and twenty ſixth upon their Return out of it.

Others were compoſed upon other Occaſions, as may be ſeen in their Titles (although thoſe are not ſuppoſed to be of the ſame Authority with the Text) or collected from the Senſe or Scope of the Pſalm.

The Book of Pſalms is divided into five Parts. The firſt reaches to the End of the forty firſt Pſalm: the ſecond to the End of the ſeventy ſecond; the third to the End of the eighty ninth: the fourth to the End of the one hundred and ſixth; and the fifth to the End of the Whole.

The whole may be deemed a Collection of divine Odes, ſublime and elegant, far beyond all human Compoſitions, conſiſting of the loftieſt Celebrations of the divine Praiſes; the moſt lively and fervent Devotions of Meditation, Thankſgiving, Prayer, and Supplication; Faith, Hope, and Truſt in God in every Condition, and the moſt excellent Inſtructions in every Branch of Piety and Virtue.

The frequent Reading of this Book hath a ſtrong Tendency to eſtabliſh in our Minds the Principles of true Wiſdom, even every right Diſpoſition toward God and Man; and that Purity of Heart, and Serenity of Mind, which is a Fund of Comfort and Joy in the Ways of God, and will animate us to walk in them with Steadineſs and Delight.

Moſes was the firſt that compoſed ſacred Hymns that we read of *Ex.* xv. *Deborah* the next, *Judg.* v. and then *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* ii. But *David*, an admirable Artiſt in Muſic, carried divine Poetry and Pſalmody to its Perfection; and therefore is called *the ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

He, doubtleſs by divine Authority appointed the ſinging of Pſalms by a ſelect Company of ſkilful Perſons, in the ſolemn worſhip of the Tabernacle, 1 *Chron.* vi. 31, which *Solomon* continued in the Temple, 2 Chron. v. 12, 13.

Hence the people became well acquainted with the Songs of *Sion*, and having committed them to Memory, were famous for melodious Singing among the neighbouring Countries, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. 3.

The Continuance of this Branch of divine Worſhip is confirmed by the Practice of our Lord and the Inſtructions of the Apoſtle, *Mat.* xxvi. 30. *Epheſ.* v. 19. Pſalm-ſinging in

in ſhort is a part of Chriſtian worſhip which ought to be ſupported, encouraged and performed in the moſt ſkilful, harmonious and devout manner.

Theſe together with the Book of *Job*, of which we have treated at large by itſelf, are the Books, that were written before the founding of *Solomon*'s Temple; proceed we therefore to a Review of thoſe Authors, who wrote from that period to the Deſtruction of the Temple. Literature by this time had made a very conſiderable Advance, probably by means of the Schools of the Prophets.

Solomon was a great Writer, as he was endowed with an uncommon ſhare of Wiſdom and Underſtanding. He ſpake three thouſand Proverbs. and his Songs were a thouſand and five. He ſpake of Trees from the Cedar that is in *Lebanon*, even unto the Hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the Wall; he ſpake alſo of Beaſts, and of Fowl, and of creeping Things and of Fiſhes. But of all his Works only three are taken into the ſacred Canon.

Proverbs.

This Books conſiſts of the moſt uſeful Rules for the proper Direction of Life in Religion and Morals, and is the moſt authentic and excellent of the Kind that can be reduced in Antiquity. It may be divided into five Parts.

In the firſt Part the Tutor gives his Pupil Admonitions, Directions, Cautions, and Excitements to the Study of Wiſdom, Chap. 1ſt. to the 10th.

The ſecond contains the Proverbs of *Solomon* properly ſo called, becauſe delivered in diſtinct, independent, general Sentences, Chap. 10th to the 22d ver. 17th.

In the third, the Tutor again addreſſeth himſelf to his Pupil, and gives him freſh Admonitions to the diligent Study of Wiſdom, which is followed by a ſet of Inſtructions, delivered in the Imperative Mood to the Pupil, who is ſuppoſed, during that time, to be ſtanding before him. Chap, 22. 18. to Chap. 25.

This fourth part is diſtinguiſhed by its being a Collection of *Solomon's* Proverbs, ſelected, we may ſuppoſe out of a much greater Number, by the Men of *Hezekiah*, perhaps by the Prophets *Iſaiah*, *Hoſea* and *Micah*, who all flouriſhed in the Days of *Hezekiah*, and not improbably aſſiſted him in his pious Endeavours to reſtore true Religion, 2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21.

This Part, as the ſecond conſiſts chiefly of diſtinct, unconnected Sentences, and reaches from Chap. xxv. to Chap. xxx.

The fifth Part contains a ſet of wiſe Obſervations and Inſtructions, which *Agur*, the Son of *Jakeh*, delivered to his Pupils, *Ithiel* and *Ucal*, Chap. xxx. The xxxi. Chapter contains the Precepts which his Mother, poſſibly a *Jewiſh* Woman, married to ſome neighbouring Prince, delivered to *Lemuel* her Son; being paſſionately ſolicitous to guard him againſt Vice, to eſtabliſh him in the Principles of Juſtice, and to have him eſpouſed to

a Woman of the beſt Qualities.

Theſe two Chapters are a Kind of Appendix to the Book of *Proverbs*. It is uncertain who *Agur* and the Mother of *Lemuel* were.

Ecclesiastes.

This Book was written by the *Preacher*, the Son of *David*, King of *Jeruſalem*. Chap. i. 1. That is to ſay, by *Solomon* (probably in the latter Part of his Life) The Subject of it is, an Enquiry into the chief Good or Happineſs of Man, in this World.

1ſt. He confutes the falſe Opinion of thoſe that place Happineſs in human Wiſdom or Philoſophy; in the Pleaſures, Amuſements, or Splendor of Life; in Honour, Magiſtracy, and Dominion; in Riches or Wealth; this in the firſt ſix Chapters

2d. He teaches, that true Felicity is to be found only in a ſerious Regard to God and Religion in the ſix laſt Chapters.

In both Parts he intermixes ſeveral incidental Reflections, which tend to make us both wiſe and pious.

The whole is admirably adapted to draw us from the inordinate Purſuit of earthly Things, and from a wrong, to a lawful uſe of them, without any Offence to God, or damage to ourſelves, till we arrive at a never dying Felicity.

The Song of Solomon.

The *Song of Solomon*, or the moſt excellent Song, was compoſed by *Solomon*; and it is a noble *Epithalamium*, or Marriage-Song, of the paſtoral Kind, embelliſhed with the moſt grand and beautiful Images.

In the Letter it is allowed to be a Celebration of the Marriage of *Solomon* to *Pharaoh*'s Daughter; but the Jewiſh Rabbies, and many of the Chriſtian Fathers, have underſtood it as a Spiritual Allegory, repreſenting the Love of God, or according to Chriſtians, of Chriſt, to his Church, which, in other Parts of Scripture, is repreſented as his Spouſe, *Pſalm* xlv. 10 &c. Hearken, O Daughter, and conſider, &c. ver. 13. The King's Daughter is all glorious within, &c.

This Pſalm *David* is thought to have compoſed upon the ſame Occaſion, namely at *Solomon*'s Marriage; wherein, as the Bridegroom is juſtly ſuppoſed to be Chriſt; ſo his Bride may well be ſuppoſed to be the Church.

John Baptiſt compares Chriſt to a Bridegroom, *John* iii. 28, 29. And ſo doth our Lord himſelf, *Matt.* ix. 15. The Kingdom of Heaven he compares to a ſumptuous Marriage-Feaſt, *Matt*, xxii. 2.

So alſo, *Rev.* xix. 17, xxi 2. the Marriage of the Lamb to his Bride or Wife, cloathed in fine Linnen, (which doubtleſs repreſents the Chriſtian Church, in a State of Purity) is ſpoken of St. *Paul*, in ſtrong Terms, ſuch as *Adam* uſed when he was married to *Eve*, repreſents Chriſt as a Huſband to the Church, *Eph.* v. 25. So alſo 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. *I have eſpouſed you to one Huſband, that I may preſent you as a chaſte Virgin to Chriſt.*

God

God is frequently ſet forth in the Prophets as the Husband or Bridegroom to the Church, *Iſa.* liv. 5. lxi. 10. *Jer.* iii. 20. *Hoſea*, ii. 7. xvi. 19. Hence, Apoſtacy from God, is very commonly repreſented as Whoredom and Adultery, both in the Old and New Teſtament.

All this is very juſt, and ſupplieth very inſtructive and comfortable Meditations; the beſt Uſe therefore we can make of this elegant Song is, thus to apply it to ſpiritual Purpoſes. But the Ideas which the Scriptures give us of God, or Chriſt's Relation to the Church, as a Husband, are too general to ſerve as a Key to the great Variety of Particulars in this Poem, which therefore, as it is never quoted in any other Part of Scripture, can be reduced to no certain Rule of Interpretation; but muſt be left to every ſerious Perſon's private Judgment.

Within this Period were alſo written the Prophecies of *Joel*, *Amos*, *Hoſea*, *Jonah*, *Iſaiah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, *Jeremiah*, *Habakkuk*, *Zephaniah*, *Obadiah*. Theſe before the Captivity. During the ſeventy Years Captivity, *Lamentations*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*. *Eſther*. After the Captivity *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, *Malachi*, 1 and 2 *Chronicles*. Theſe complete the Canon of the Old Teſtament.

As it is of great Uſe to the right Underſtanding of the Prophets, to know the Reigns and Times in which they propheſied, and the particular Occaſions upon which any of them delivered their Prophecies, we ſhall attempt to digeſt and range them in chronological Order.

CHAP. II.

Prophets before the Captivity.

ABOUT twenty ſix Years after the Death of *Eliſha* the Prophet, 2 *Kings* xiii. 20. Jonah *the Son of* Amittai, *the Prophet which was of* Gatheper, was ſent by God with a Meſſage of Encouragement and Succeſs to *Jeroboam* the ſecond, King of *Iſrael*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 25. This might happen when *Jonah* was about twenty eight Years of Age.

JOEL. i. ii. iii.

Joel at *Jeruſalem* (Joel ii. i. 15, 17.) might prophecy before *Amos* at *Samaria*, *Amos* i. 1, 4. for *Amos*, Chap. iv. 7, 9. may refer to the Devaſtation by *Palmer*-Worms, &c. and Drought which *Joel* predicted, Chap. i. 6, 7, 19, 20. However, as the Senſe of this Prophecy in no Part depends upon the Time when it was delivered, there can be no Impropriety in ſuppoſing that *Joel* propheſied about this Time.

AMOS i. 9.

Some Time after *Joel*, *Amos* might begin to propheſy in the Kingdom of *Iſrael*. It is certain that he did propheſy in thoſe Days of *Uzziah* or *Azariah* King of *Judah*, in which they were Cotemporaries, Chap. i. 1. How long he continued is not intimated. He had no regular Educa-

tion in the Schools of the Prophets, (which ſuppoſeth that other Prophets had) but was originally a Herdſman and *a gatherer of Sycamore Fruits* or wild Figs, Chap. vii. 14. He had an expreſs Commiſſion from God to propheſy unto his People *Iſrael*, v. 15. This Book may conſiſt of ſeveral diſtinct Diſcourſes, but as they are without Date, we cannot aſſign the particular Times in which they were delivered.

HOSEA 1. 2, 3.

Hoſea is juſtly ſuppoſed to have been Cotemporary with *Amos*. He propheſied againſt the ten Tribes, or the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, beginning in the Reign of *Jeroboam* the ſecond, and propheſying in the Reigns of *Uzziah*, *Jotham*, *Ahaz*, and *Hezekiah*, Kings of *Judah*. He predicted the Captivity of the ten Tribes; and as that Captivity happened in the ſixth Year of *Hezekiah*, probably he lived to ſee it accompliſhed by *Shalmanezer* King of *Aſſyria*, which was effected about 64 Years after the Commencement of his prophetic Office.

This Prophet is commanded to take unto him *a Wife of Whoredoms, and Children of Whoredoms*, Chap. i. 2. This might all be tranſacted in a Viſion, in the *Council of God*. See the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh Chapters of *Ezekiel*. As it might be a Parable, to be ſpoken as ſuch to the Children of *Iſrael*. See *Ezekiel* xxiv. 3, &c. where that is ordered to be done as a Fact, which was only to be ſpoken as a Parable. But if the Prophet did really marry a lewd Women, who had Children not by him, but by ſome other Man, this was no Sin in him, who did it by divine Command, in order to explain to the *Iſraelites*, their Wickedneſs and the Puniſhment of it.

The adulterous Wife repreſented the *Iſraelites*, who by their Idolatries had gone a whoring from God, their own Husband. The Children which this Woman bare are the ruinous Effects of the Idolatry of the Children of *Iſrael*: the firſt Baſtard was called *Jezreel*, and denoted the Vengeance which God would take upon the Houſe of *Jehu*, for the Blood which he ſhed in *Jezreel*, Chap, i. 4. The ſecond was called *Lo-ruhamah*, to denote that God would no longer ſpare the Houſe of *Iſrael*, but take them quite away out of their Land. The Names of the third was *Loammi*, which ſignifies that the Relation between God and the Iſraelites was diſſolved.

The *Interregnum* in *Iſrael*, preceding the Reign of *Zechariah*, was doubtleſs a Time of very great Diſorder and Violence, and of much bloody Strife for the Crown. Probably *Zechariah* gained it by cutting off Competitors. *Shallum* ſlew him, *Menahem* ſlew *Shallum*, and all within the Space of ſeven Months.

To this ſad State of Things *Hoſea* may well be ſuppoſed to refer, Chap. iv. 2. *By ſwearing, and lying, and killing, and ſtealing, and committing Adultry, they break out, and Blood toucheth Blood.* Here therefore we may place the fourth Chapter of *Hoſea*.

JONAH

JONAH, 1, 2, 3, 4.

Jonah is ſuppoſed by Divines, to have been ſent about the ſecond Year of *Menahem*, King of *Iſrael*, and about the ſeventieth Year of his Age, to cry againſt *Nineveh*, then a great wealthy, populous and haughty City, the chief Seat of the *Aſſyrian* Empire, and the Miſtreſs of the World, which had along been remarkable for Luxury and Debauchery. By *Zephaniah* is it called *the rejoycing*, or joyous City, Chap. ii. 15.

To be ſent with a Meſſage of divine Wrath to ſuch a Place as this, could not but ſeem a frightful and dangerous Errand to *Jonah*. He ſaw how much the *Iſraelites*, God's own People, hated and perſecuted the Prophets, who reproved and threatened them. What then could he expect from that great and wicked City *Nineveh*, the head Quarters of Pride and Sin? Further, he knew the Prophets very much hazarded their Reputation in the World, when employ'd in denouncing Judgments; becauſe God being gracious, was ſlow in executing them.

On this Account the Prophets at *Bethel* and *Jeruſalem* were vilely abuſed and decried by inſolent and rude Infidels, who durſt even profeſs to *deſire*, or long for, *the Day of the Lord*, (*Amos* v. 18.) in a confident Perſuaſion, that it would never come, and dared to challenge the Almighty to haſten his Work. *Iſaiah* v. 19. If this ſhould be *Jonah*'s Caſe at *Nineveh*, what could he expect, but to be torn in Pieces for an Impoſtor? How muſt he, and the Religion he profeſſed, be expoſed to public Scorn and Contempt?

This was what he particularly dreaded, Chap. iv. 2. He was therefore reſolved *to flee from the Preſence of Jehovah*, that is, to retire to ſome remote Country beyond Sea.

But he was ſtopt by a Miracle, and at length obliged to deliver the doleful Meſſage, *Yet Forty Days and* impentitent *Neneveth ſhall be overthrown.* Convinced of his miraculous Miſſion, the King proclaimed a Faſt, and enjoined all the uſual Forms of *Repentance; and God repented of the Evil, which he had ſaid he would do unto them.*

It is very probable that the idolatrous Prieſts, the Aſtrologers, Soothſayers, and Magicians, who muſt be numerous at *Nineveth*, as well as at *Babylon* (*Iſai.* xlvii. 13. *Dan.* ii. 2.) would zealouſly endeavour to divert the King, when the firſt Fright was over, from attending to a Meſſage from *Jehovah*, as ſoon as they poſſibly could, before the forty Days were expired. They would naturally repreſent *Jonah* to the King and all the People as an Impoſtor, and inſinuate to them, that the Prediction was falſe and would not be fulfilled.

This muſt give the Prophet, who was zealous for the Glory of the God of *Iſrael* very great Uneaſineſs, inſomuch that he wiſhed for Death, Chap. iv. 23. as *Elijah* in a Caſe ſomewhat ſimilar, had done before him, 1 *Kings* xix. 4.

The Queſtion of *Jehovah*, Jonah iv. 4. which we render *Doſt thou well*

to

to be angry? Should have been rendered, *Art thou very much grieved?*

Pul the King of *Aſſyria*, who came againſt the Land of *Iſrael* in the Reign of *Menahem*. 2 King xv. 19. is ſuppoſed by Archbiſhop *Uſher* to be King of *Nineveh* to whom *Jonah* was ſent. As it appears from the Hiſtory, that *Pul* then had no Deſign to make a Conqueſt of the Land of *Iſrael*; we can aſſign no Reaſon, why he ſhould reach his Arm over the Kingdom of *Syria*, which lay to the Extent of about three hundred Miles, between his Dominions, and the Land of *Canaan*, to ſtrike at *Iſrael*, but that he did it in Revenge for the ſuppoſed Inſult, which *Jonah* had offered to him and his People.

ISAIAH vi. 2, 3, 4. 5.

Iſaiah, the brighteſt Luminary of the *Jewiſh* Church, juſtly called the evangelical prophet, becauſe he ſpeaks ſo much and ſo clearly of Chriſt, began to Propheſy in the Year King *Uzziah* died, Chap. vi. 1. and propheſied in *Judah* in the ſucceſſive Reigns of *Jotham*, *Ahaz*, and *Hezekiah*. He was certainly alive and propheſied; when *Merodach-Baladen* ſent his Embaſſy to *Hezekiah* in the 14th Year of his reign and before Chriſt, 714, hence it evidently follows that he propheſied forty ſix Years.*

The firſt Chapter, by reaſon of the grand and ſpirited Exordium, might be judged proper to ſtand in the Front of the Book; but it gives ſuch an Account of the diſtreſſed, deſolate Condition of the Land of *Judah*, as agrees much better with the wicked and afflicted Reign of the apoſtate *Ahaz*, than the flouriſhing Circumſtances of the Country in the Reigns of *Uzziah*, and of his Son and Succeſſor *Jotham*, who were both in the main good Princes; compare *Iſai.* i. 7, 8, 9. with 2 *Chron* xxvi. 1 to 16, and the whole ſubſequent Chapter. But the ſecond, third, fourth, and fifth Chapters of this Prophecy, do deſcribe, and exactly correſpond with a State of national Wealth and Proſperity, which are uſually attended with Pride, Arrogance, and Luxury. See Chap. ii. 6 to 18. iii. 16. to 25. Therefore it is preſumed that this is the Order of thoſe Chapters.

In the ſixth Chapters, and in the Year before Chriſt 759, the Prophet, in the Council of God received his Commiſſion; and ſoon after delivered the Contents of the ſecond, third, fourth and fifth Chapters, which contain all that remains of his Prophecies, in the Reign of *Uzzah* and *Jotham*, for about the Space of Sixteen Years, till the firſt Year of King *Ahaz*.

MICAH. 1, 2.

Theſe two Chapters were delivered before the Deſtruction of *Samaria*,

* There is an ancient Tradition, that the Prophet ſuffered Martyrdom, ſome time after this date, by being cruelly ſawn aſunder, to which the Author of the *Hebrews* is ſuppoſed to refer, *Heb.* xi. 37. but it is not ſufficiently authenticated to be offered as Matter of Fact.

which

which is here predicted, Chap. i. 6. in the Reign of *Jotham*, Chap. i. 1. and therefore may be properly placed about this Time.

ISAIAH 7.

In the first Year of *Ahaz*, King of *Judah*; *Rezin*, King of *Syria*, and *Pekah*, King of *Israel*, formed a Design of dethroning *Ahaz*, and extirpating the Family of *David*, by setting up the Son of *Tabeal*, some potent, factious Jew, to be King of *Judah*. Therefore having no Design upon the Nation, but only upon the Royal Family, they marched directly to *Jerusalem*, and laid close Siege to it.

But as it was the Will of God not to extirpate the Family of *David*, and only to punish wicked *Ahaz*, he sent *Isaiah* to encourage him to make a vigorous Defence, and to assure him, that he should not prevail against him; and that the House of *David* should subsist till the Coming of the *Messiah*. Then was the Prophecy to *Ahaz* contained in the seventh Chapter of *Isaiah*.

Chap. 8, 9, 10 to the 5th Verse.

Ahaz, a wicked Idolater, had little Regard to what *Isaiah* had spoken of him, in the Name of the Lord. Therefore God commanded the Prophet to take a large Roll of Parchment, and therein, with the Pen of a Man, that is, in the common and most legible Manner of Writing, to put down, and publish, what God should farther discover about the present Deliverance and future Calamities of *Judah*.

The Roll was to be a Comment upon the Name of a Son, which was then born to the Prophet, and by divine Direction was called *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*, that is, *make Speed to the Spoil, and hasten to the Prey*; denoting the speedy Destruction of the two confederate Kings of *Samaria* and *Damascus*. This Roll we presume, takes in the eighth and ninth Chapters of *Isaiah*, and the five first Verses of the tenth Chapter.

Chapter seventeen relates to the same Subject, the Destruction of *Israel* and *Damascus*, and therefore seems to have been delivered in the same Year, after the Roll was finished; for, about two Years after, *Tiglath-Pileser*, King of *Assyria*, took *Damascus*, and carried the People therein captive to *Kir*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 9.

Chapter first, *Pekah* and *Rezin* failing in their Attempt upon *Jerusalem*, the next Year, seven hundred and forty-one, they returned with Forces better disciplined, and Councils better concerted; and dividing themselves into three Bodies, one under *Pekah*, another under *Rezin*, and a third under *Zichri a mighty Man of* Ephraim; they fell down the Country in three different Parts, making every where terrible Havock and Slaughter, and carrying away a prodigious Number of Captives. See 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 5 to 9.

No sooner was the Land free from those Enemies, than it was invaded by the *Edomites* on the South, and the *Philistines* on the West, who be-

haved with the ſame Cruelty, ſlaying, plundering, and carrying away Captives. See 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 17, 18, 19.

Thus was *Judah* grievouſly diſtreſſed throughout the whole Country, and brought exceeding low, though lately ſo opulent and powerful, becauſe the Inhabitants and their King had forſaken the Lord their God. Upon this Occaſion, moſt probably, *Iſaiah* delivered the prophetic Diſcourſe, contained in the firſt Chapter, as it is very ſuitable to the State of the Nation at that Time.

Chapter twenty eight, relating to the Deſtruction of *Ephraim*, or the Ten Tribes, without any Mention of *Syria* or *Damaſcus*, lies between the Deſtruction of *Damaſcus* and the Captivity of the ten Tribes.

HOSEA, 5, 6.

Ahaz, greatly diſtreſſed by *Pekah*, *Rezin*, &c, called in *Tiglath-pileſer*, King of *Aſſyria*, to his Help, 2 *Kings* xvi. 7. and *Menahem*, King of *Iſrael*, ſeveral Years before, had hired *Pul*, King of *Aſſyria*, to confirm the Kingdom in his Hand, 2 *Kings* xv. 19. though they reaped no Benefit from them.

Theſe are the only Times in which the Kings of *Judah* and *Iſrael* applied to the *Aſſyrians* for Aſſiſtance; and as *Hoſea* mentions both theſe Applications, the fifth and ſixth Chapters muſt be taken in after *Ahaz* had applied to *Tiglath-pileſer*.

ISAIAH, 14, 28, &c.

The *Philiſtines* triumphed over *Iſreal* all the Days of *Ahaz*; but in the Year *Ahaz* died, *Iſaiah* delivered the *Burden* or Meſſage to them, Ch. xiv. 28, &c. which was fulfilled by *Hezekiah*, Son and Succeſſor to *Ahaz*.

Chapter 15 and 16, the *Moabites* had not treated the *Iſraelites* well, who fled for Shelter from the Ravages of *Pekah* and *Rezin*. With this Inhumanity they are ironically upbraided, *Iſaiah* xvi. 3, 4. but now they are told, the Oppreſſion and Spoils were ceaſed, and the Throne of *Hezekiah* ſhould *be eſtabliſhed in Mercy, and he ſhould ſit upon it in Truth, &c.* Therefore this Prophecy againſt *Moab* muſt have been delivered about the Beginning (perhaps in the ſecond Year) of *Hezekiah*'s Reign.

It is ſuppoſed by a learned Divine, to have been accompliſhed by *Shalmanezer*, three or four Years after, when according to his Opinion, *Shalmanezer* previous to the Siege of *Samaria*, ſubdued the *Moabites*, to prevent any Incurſions and Attacks from that Quarter.

HOSEA, Chapters 7 and 14.

The Prophecies contained in theſe Chapters were delivered (1) after *Ephraim*, or the King of *Iſrael*, had called to *Egypt* for Succour, Chap. vii. 11.

The only Time they applied to *Egypt* was, when King *Hoſea*, revolting from *Shalmanezer*, ſent Meſſengers to *So*, King of *Egypt*, 2 *Kings* xvii. 4. which occaſioned *Shalmanezer*'s beſieging *Samaria*, and carrying the ten Tribes into Captivity; therefore

fore theſe Chapters might be delivered about three Years before that Event.

(2) Theſe Prophecies were delivered after the firſt Year of *Shalmanezer*, who according to an eminent Chronologer began to reign in the Year before Chriſt 728 or 729; for the Prophet *Hoſea* refers to the Deſtruction of *Beth-arbel* by *Shalman*, Chap. x. 14. and they were delivered before the taking of *Samaria*, which was in the eighth Year of *Shalmanezer*, before Chriſt 721; for the Prophet evidently in thoſe Chapters ſuppoſes that *Ephraim*, or the ten Tribes, were not yet carried into Captivity; therefore they were delivered after the Deſtruction of *Beth-arbel*, and before the Captivity of the ten Tribes, about the Time above noted.

MICAH, Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

The laſt Verſe of the third Chapter of *Micah*, was uttered in the Time of *Hezekiah*, *Jer.* xxvi. 13. and here may that Chapter, and all that follow be placed, as propheſied in ſome Time of *Hezekiah*'s firſt thirteen Years, before *Sennacherib* beſieged *Jeruſalem*; for the Prophet ſeems to ſpeaks of that Siege, and *Sennacherib*'s Blaſphemy, Chap. v. 1, 5. He ſpeaks glorious Things of Chriſt and his Kingdom, and names the very Town where he ſhould be born, Chap. v. 2.

In Chap. iv. 1, 2, 3. he uſes the very Words of *Iſaiah*, Chap. ii. 2. 3, 4. to expreſs the Conflux to the Kingdom of Chriſt, his Power in it, and the Peace which at length it ſhould give the World.

NAHUM, Chapters 1, 2, 3.

After *Shalmanazer*, King of *Nineveh*, had taken *Samaria*, and carried the ten Tribes Captive, *Nahum* might predict the Ruin of *Nineveh*, then the Capital of the *Aſſyrian* Empire.

ISAIAH, Chap. 23.

Shalmanezer, having taken *Samaria*, turned his Army againſt the City of *Tyre*, which ſuſtained his Attack five Years, and then was delivered from the Siege by Means of his Death.

By this Succeſs they were two much elated, and growing very inſolent; this occaſioned the Prophecy againſt them in this Chapter, which foretells the miſerable Overthrow of *Tyre* that was affected by *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*.

ISAIAH, Chapters 24, 25, 26, 27.

Theſe Chapters may refer to the final Deſolution of *Judea* and *Jeruſalem*, by *Nebuchadnezzar*; but we can diſcover no Marks of the Time when they were delivered. However, with the Threatenings, he mixes many gracious Promiſes and Comforts.

ISAIAH, Chapters 38, 39.

In this Year King *Hezekiah* fell ſick, and the other Affairs happened that are recorded in this Chapter for fifteen Years, are added to *Hezekiah*'s Life, Chap. 38, 5. and as he reigned in all twenty nine Years; this muſt

muſt have been in the fourteenth Year of his Reign; and that it happened when the Intentions of *Sennacherib*, King of *Aſſyria*, to attack *Jeruſalem* were known, appears from *Iſaiah* xxxviii. 6.

ISAIAH, Ch. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

Hezekiah, having refuſed to pay the Annual Tribute to the King of *Aſſyria*, towards the End of the fourteenth Year, *Sennacherib* came upon him with a numerous Army, and he therefore prepared for a vigorous Defence, 2 *Kings* xviii. 13. *Iſaiah* xxxvi. 6. Particularly he entered into an Alliance with the King of *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 21. *Iſaiah* xxvi. 6.

This was a Meaſure diſpleaſing to God, and therefore proteſted againſt by his Prophet *Iſaiah* in the thirtieth and thirty firſt Chapters, and at the ſame Time, all the other Chapters, from the twenty ninth to the thirty ſixth Chapter, eſpecially thoſe that have immediate Reference to this Invaſion, might have been dictated to the Prophet by the Spirit of God.

ISAIAH, Ch. xxii. v. 1 to 15.

As in this Paragraph there are manifeſt Alluſions to *Sennacherib's* Invaſion, and *Hezekiah's* Preparations for the Defence of *Jeruſalem*, (compare v. 9, 10, 11. 2 *Chron* xxxii. 5. 30.) this prophetic Admonition to the People, who depended too much upon theſe Preparations, probably were delivered about this Time.

ISAIAH, Chap. xxi.

The Inhabitants of *Kedar* were the Deſcendants of *Iſhmael*, *Gen.* xxv. 13. and were one Species of Arabians Dwelling in *Arabia Petræa*. Theſe were to be ruined within a Year after this Prophecy was given out. Moſt probably they were overthrown either by *Sennacherib* as he went into or returned out of *Egypt* again, or by *Tirhakah* King of *Ethiopia*, as he advanced out of *Egypt* againſt *Sennacherib*, 2 *Kings* xix. 9. and therefore this Prophecy may be placed at this Time, or within a Year or two of it.

ISAIAH, Ch. 20.

Hezekiah, having treated with *Sennacherib*, and agreed to pay him a Sum of Money, 2 *Kings* xviii. 14, 15, 16. that Prince turned his Arms againſt *Egypt*, which he greatly diſtreſſed for three Years together, *Iſaiah* xx. 3, 4. But he firſt ſent *Tartan* one of his Generals, before him to take *Aſhdod*, the Key to *Egypt*. At this Time the Prophecy againſt *Egypt* in this Chapter was declared. Obſerve, *Sennacherib* in Verſe 1. is called *Sargon*, and it is ſaid ver. 5. *they*, that is the Jews, *ſhall be afraid and aſhamed of* Ethiopia *their Expectation, and of* Egypt *their Glory*.

ISAIAH, Ch. 18 and 19.

Theſe Chapters are alſo levelled againſt *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, upon which the Jews relied too much; and therefore might be delivered about the ſame Time.

ISAIAH

Isaiah x. v. 5, &c. 11, 12, 13, 14, to v. 28.

It appears from Chap. x. 8 to 12. which is *a Proſopopeia* or ſuppoſed Speech of the King of *Aſſria*, that this Chapter was delivered after the taking of *Samaria* by *Shalmanezer* 721, and ſome Time before *Sennacherib* beſieged *Jeruſalem* after the taking of *Samaria*. The Speech in this Place bearing an Affinity to that of *Sennacherib*, 2 *Kings* xix. 10 to 14, *Iſaiah* xxxvii. 10 to 14. it is probable that this and the other Chapters to the 28th Verſe of the 14th Chapter were delivered about the Time that *Sennacherib* beſieged *Jeruſalem*, Obſerve Chap. x. v. 11. *Shall I not as I have done unto* Samaria *and her Idols, ſo do to* Jeruſalem *and her Idols?* Here he ſpeaks as King of *Aſſyria*, and ſo takes in what his Father *Shalmanezer* had done as if done by himſelf.

Isaiah. Chap. 36, 37.

Sennacherib returning out of *Egypt* where he had been three Years, notwithſtanding the Agreement of Peace, which he made with *Hezekiah*, marched his Army again into *Judea*, laid Siege to *Lachiſh*, and from thence ſent three of his Generals with a proud and blaſphemous Meſſage to *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 17, 18. This Event with the Circumſtances which attended and followed it, are recorded in the 36th and 37th Chapters of this Prophecy.

Obſerve, before *Sennacherib* laid Siege to *Jeruſalem*, *Tirhakah*, King of *Ethiopia*, advanced againſt him out of *Egypt*, 2 *Kings* xix. 9. But as the Prophet *Iſaiah* had predicted, did the Jews no Service, for he was overthrown by *Sennacherib*, who after that returned to *Jeruſalem* where his Army conſiſting of one hundred and eighty-five thouſand Men, were all miraculouſly deſtroyed in one Night.

Isaiah, Chap. 40, 41, 42, 43, to the End of the Book.

As there is no Direction to refer to thoſe Chapters, or any one of them to any particular Time; they may be allotted to the eleven laſt Years of *Hezekiah*'s prolonged Life.

Isaiah, xxii. v. 15, to the End.

Shebna had been Secretary to King *Hezekiah*, and the pious *Eliakim*, Maſter of his Houſhold, *Iſaiah* 39. 3. *Shebna* by the Queſtions, Chap. xxii. 16. ſeems to have been a Foreigner, and not well affected to the Jewiſh Religion. *What haſt thou* to do *here? And whom*, what Relations, *haſt thou here?* It is poſſible this *Shebna*, a Man of great Abilities might have had the Tuition of the young King *Maneſſeh*, but twelve Years old, and the whole Management of Affairs, into his own Hands; having routed *Eliakim* by ſuch Arts as Coutriers are wont to practice; for he was now both Treaſurer and Maſter of the Houſhold. To this, perhaps the wicked Conduct of *Manaſſeh* may be aſſigned.

Shebna, ſecure of the Stability, and Continuanee of his Power and Grandeur, was hewing out a magnificent

Sepulchre for himſelf and Heirs, to perpetuate his Memory to all ſucceeding Times. On this Occaſion, *Iſaiah* might publiſh this Prophecy, predicting *Shebna*'s Captivity and Death, in a remote Country, and the future Exaltation of good *Eliakim*.

This which would greatly exaſperate *Shebna*, and might occaſion *Iſaiah*'s being put to Death, was fulfilled about twenty two Years after, when *Shebna* was taken captive with *Manaſſeh* by *Eſarhaddon*, and carried to *Babylon*, where he continued during the Remainder of his Life; but *Manaſſeh*, upon his Repentance, was reſtored to the Throne of *Judah*; and probably the Good *Eliakim* was reſtored and intruſted with the Management of all his Affairs, and aſſiſted him in the great Reformation he made in Religion.

JEREMIAH, Chapters 1, and 2.

In the Year 677 before Chriſt, and twenty ſecond of the Reign of *Manaſſeh*, *Jeremiah* received his Prophetic Commiſſion, as contained in the firſt Chapter, and in the ſame Year, probably he publiſhed the Admonitious Warnings and Threatenings we read in the ſecond.

JEREMIAH, Chapter 11, Verſe 1, to 18.

The Prophet, Verſe 2 to 9, moſt probably refers to the Covenant which *Joſiah* publickly made to keep God's Commandments, upon finding the Book of the Law, 2 *Kings* xxii. 11. This was in the eighteenth Year of his Reign, 2 *Kings* xxii. 3.

JEREMIAH, Ch. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. to 21.

Theſe Chapters, for any thing that appears to the contrary, lie in regular Order; nor have we any Ground or Intimation for tranſpoſing them.

There is a Date, Chap. iii. 6. In the Days of *Joſiah*, without mentioning the Year of his Reign, which however ſhew that the Chapter was delivered in the ſame Part of his Reign.

And whereas a ſevere Drought is frequently mentioned in ſeveral of theſe Chapters, it ſhews that they are to be laid together in the ſame Year, or Years in which the Drought continued; and all the reſt to the twenty firſt may follow in order of Time, and all might be delivered in the laſt Years of King *Joſiah*.

JEREMIAH, Ch. 11 Verſe 18, to the End.

In ſome Part of the ſame Year the Men of *Anathoth* might conſpire againſt *Jeruſalem*.

HABAKKUK, Ch. 1, 2, 3.
ZEPHANIAH, Ch. 1, 2, 3.

As theſe two Prophets propheſied the ſame Things that *Jeremiah* did, and upon the ſame Occaſion, that is, Deſtruction and Deſolation upon *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of the many heinous Sins they were guilty of, they might propheſy about this Time.

JE-

Jeremiah, Chapter 22, Verſe 1 to 24.

The Prophet being ſent of God to the King's Houſe, there proclaimed God's judgments againſt him, and his Family, contained in theſe Verſes of this Chapter.

This was ſoon after *Jehoahaz*, or *Shallum*, was carried captive into *Egypt*, by *Pharaoh-necho*, King of *Egypt*, who ſlew *Joſiah*, Verſe 10, *Weep not for the Dead*, Joſiah, *but weep for him that goeth away* Jehoahaz; *for he ſhall return no more*.

Note. *Jehoahaz* reigned but three Months.

Jeremiah, Chap. 26.

After that, the Prophet was commanded to go to the Temple, and denounce to all the People the Judgments of God, if they did not repent. By this he was brought into Danger of his Life, through the Reſentment of the Prieſts and Prophets, Ver. 7, 8. but was preſerved by the Princes, Ver. 16.

Jeremiah, Chap. 25.

In this Chapter, and in the Beginning of this Year, *Jeremiah* propheſied of the coming of *Nebuchadnezzar* againſt *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*.

Jeremiah, 35.

The *Rechabites*, upon *Nebuchadnezzar*'s beginning to invade the Land of *Judea*, retired out of the Country to *Jeruſalem*, where *Jeremiah* found them, in this Chapter.

Jeremiah, 46.

In the ſame Year, after *Nebuchadnezzar* had defeated the Army of *Pharaoh-necho*, this Prophecy relating to the *Gentiles* was delivered.

Jeremiah, Ch. 36, Verſe 1 to 9.

In the ſame Year God commanded *Jeremiah* to collect and write in a Roll, all the Words of Prophecy, which had been ſpoken by him againſt *Iſrael* and *Judah*, and againſt the Nations.

This he executed with the Aſſiſtance of *Baruch* his Amanuenſis, who as *Jeremiah* was then under Confinement, Ver 5. read the Roll in the Temple, upon the Faſting-Day, that is, the great Day of Atonement, being the Tenth of the ſeventh Month.

Jeremiah, 45.

Baruch, being very much affrighted at the Threats contained in the Roll, and probably uneaſy under Apprehenſions of the Danger he might incur by reading it publicly; *Jeremiah*, by the divine Command, delivered to him the Meſſage of Encouragement contained in the Chapter.

Daniel Chapter 1.

Immediately after this, *Nebuchadnezzar*, who ſet out upon his Expedition the Year before, laid ſiege to *Jeruſalem*, took it, and bound *Jehoiakim* in Fetters, with a Deſign to carry him to *Babylon*, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 6.

But

But upon *Jehoiakim*'s Submiſſion, did not carry him thither, but reſtored him to the Kingdom. Nevertheleſs, he carried great Numbers of the People, and Sons of the Royal Family, and of the Nobility, Captives, and among the reſt *Daniel*.

JEREMIAH, Chap. 36. Ver. 9, to the End.

This Year, after the *Chaldeans* were gone from *Jeruſalem*, *Jehoiakim* and his People growing worſe and worſe, in the ninth Month, at the Faſt, which was then proclaimed on Account of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s having taken the City the year before: *Baruch* again read the Roll in the Houſe of the Lord, which coming to the King's Ear, and Part of the Roll being read to him; he thinking perhaps, that *Nebuchadnezzar* had already executed the divine Threatenings, that nothing more was now to be feared; and that the Prophet was a malicious, troubleſome Fellow, burnt the Roll, and commanded *Jeremiah* and *Baruch* to be apprehended; but they could not be found, for the Lord concealed them.

Obſerve; *Jeremiah* was now at Liberty.

DANIEL 2.

In this Year, which was the ſecond of *Nebuchadnezzar*, according to the *Babyloniſh* Account, the fourth according to the *Jewiſh*, *Daniel* revealed to *Nebuchadnezzar* his Dream.

JEREMIAH, Chap. 22. Ver. 24, to the End.

In this Year, this Prophecy was declared againſt *Jehoiachin*, or *Coniah*, who reigned but three Months, and then, with many others, were carried away into Captivity, 2 *Kings* xxiv, 11, &c.

His Uncle, *Zedekiah*, ſucceeded him, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 17.

JEREMIAH, 23.

This Chapter might be delivered at the ſame Time with the foregoing Prophecy.

JEREMIAH, Chap. 13, Ver. 15 to the End.

By the King and Queen mentioned Ver. 18, are probably meant *Jehoiachin*, and his Mother. See Chap. 22, ver. 26. 2 *Kings* xxiv. 12.

Thus this Prophecy muſt have been delivered about the ſame Time with the foregoing.

JEREMIAH, 24.

After *Jehoiachin*, or *Jeconiah*, was carried into Captivity by *Nebuchadnezzar*, this Prophecy was delivered.

JEREMIAH Chap. 49. Ver. 34 to the End.

In this Year alſo, is to be placed the Prophecy againſt *Elam*, a Kingdom upon the River *Ulai*, Eaſtward, beyond the *Tigris*, in which ſtood *Shuſhan*, afterwards the Metropolis of the Kingdom of *Perſia*.

JEREMIAH 29.

About the ſecond Year of *Zedekiah*'s Reign, *Jeremiah*'s Letter, contained in this Chapter, was ſent to the

the captive Jews at *Babylon*, and an imperious Anſwer returned by *Shemaiah*.

JEREMIAH, 30, 31.

Theſe two Chapters, which aſſure the captive Jews, that they ſhould not only return again to *Judea*, but alſo be the particular Care of the divine Providence to the End of the World; to ſhew the Certainty of the encouraging Contents, are ordered to be written in a Book, Chap. 30, Ver. 2 about the ſame Time with the foregoing Letter, and probably were ſent to the captive Jews in *Babylon*, whom they principally reſpected.

JEREMIAH 27.

This Chapter is to be placed in this Year (ſee Chap. 28, Ver. 1.) namely after the Departure of *Nebuchadnezzar* out of *Judea* and *Syria*, when the Kings of the *Ammonites*, *Moabites*, *Edomites*, *Zidonians*, *Tyrians*, &c. ſent an Embaſſy to *Zedekiah*, propoſing to him a League againſt the King of *Babylon*.

Obſerve. In the firſt Verſe *Jehoiakin* is put for *Zedekiah* (ſee Verſe 3.) probably by a Miſtake of the Tranſcriber, who might then have his Eye upon the firſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter.

JEREMIAH 28.

In this Year the Affair concerning *Hananiah*, the falſe Prophet, related in this Chapter, was tranſacted.

Obſerve. The firſt Verſe, according to the beſt Commentators, ſhould be read thus, *When it had been ſo*, (that is, when I had continued propheſying with a Yoke upon my Shoulders from that Year, which) *in the beginning of the Reign of* Zedekiah *untill the forth Year*, &c.

JEREMIAH 50, 51.

Theſe two Chapters contain a Book of Prophecies, which *Jeremiah* wrote, and ſent to *Babylon* by *Seraiah*, who was ſent thither by *Zedekiah*, in the fourth Year of his Reign, Chapters 51, 59.

EZEKIEL, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

In the fifth Year of *Jehoiakin*'s Captivity, which was alſo the fifth of *Zedekiah*'s Reign, *Ezekiel*, a captive Prieſt in *Chaldea*, received his Prophetic Commiſſion in the Council of God and had the Revelations and Prophecies contained in the ſeven firſt Chapters of his Book.

Obſerve. *Ezekiel* dates his Prophecies from the Year in which himſelf and King *Jehoiakin* were carried into Captivity.

EZEKIEL, Ch. 8, 9, 10, 11.

This Year *Ezekiel* in a Viſion was carried to *Jeruſalem*, ſhewn the ſeveral Sorts of Idolatry practiſed there by the Jews, in the very Temple, and had revealed unto him the Puniſhments which God would inflict upon them for theſe Abominations, and the divine Protection of thoſe in Captivity, who continued ſtedfaſt and faithful to his Worſhip and Service.

EZEKIEL, Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

About this Time, *Zedekiah* having entered into a Confederacy with the King of *Egypt*, and broke the ſolemn Oath of Fidelity, which he had ſworn to King *Nebuchadnezzar*. God, both by Types and Words of Revelation, foreſhewed to *Ezekiel*, the taking of *Jeruſalem* by the *Chaldeans*. *Zedekiah*'s Flight by Night, the putting out of his Eyes, his Impriſonment and Death at *Babylon*, the carrying away of the Jews, and the Remains of the *Iſraelites* contained in the above-mentioned Chapter.

Obſerve. *Daniel*, though then but a young Man, was grown to ſuch a Pitch of Piety and Holineſs as to be matched by God himſelf with *Noah*, and *Job*, *Ezekiel* xiv. 14, 20.

EZEKIEL, 20, 21, 22, 23.

The Elders of *Iſrael* came to *Ezekiel* to enquired of the Lord; but God refuſes to be enquired of by ſuch deteſtable Hypocrites; and in theſe four Chapters, denounces the Judgments, their abominable Impieties deſerved.

JEREMIAH, Ch. 21, 24. Verſe 1 to 8.

Nebuchadnezzar having advanced with a great Army againſt *Judea*, 2 *Kings* xxv. 1. to puniſh *Zedekiah* for Perjury and Rebellion. That Prince firſt ſent *Paſhur* and *Zephaniah* to *Jeremiah*, to deſire him to enquire of the Lord; by whom *Jeremiah* returned the Anſwer related in the twenty firſt Chapter.

Afterward, *Jeremiah* was ordered in Perſon to deliver to *Hezekiah* the Prediction contained in Chapter 24, Ver. 1 to 8.

JEREMIAH 47.

Pharaoh-hophra, marched out of *Egypt* to the Relief of his Ally *Zedekiah*, againſt *Nebuchadnezzar*, who was advancing to his Siege at *Jeruſalem*, and in his Way took *Gaza*, a Town of the *Philiſtines*.

A little before this Event, *Jeremiah* uttered this Prophecy againſt the *Philiſtines*.

JEREMIAH, Chap. 48, 49, Ver 1 to 34.

Theſe Prophecies relating to the *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, &c. who would be obnoxious to the Ravages of the *Aſſyrian* Armies, might be delivered at the ſame Time with the former.

EZEKIEL Ch. 24, 25.

On the tenth Day of the tenth Month, in the ſame Year when *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Army had laid Siege to *Jeruſalem*, the ſame was revealed on the very ſame Day to *Ezekiel* in *Chaldea*, and the Deſtruction of the City was typified by a boiling Cauldron. But Vengeance is denounced againſt the neighbouring Countries, that rejoiced in the preceding Calamites, or ſhould rejoice in thoſe that were to come upon *Judea*, Chapter 25.

JERE-

Jeremiah Chapter 37, Verſe 1 to 11.

Not long after, *Nebuchadnezzar's* Army had laid Siege to *Jeruſalem*, *Pharaoh-hophra* came, with a great Force to the Relief of *Zedekiah*; upon which *Nebuchadnezzar* raiſed the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, in order to march againſt him. *Zedekiah* ſent a Meſſage to *Jeremiah*, before he was put into Priſon, Chap. 37, Ver. 4. the Anſwer to which is contained in Chap. 37. ver. 1 to 11.

Jeremiah Ch. 34, Ver. 8 to the End.

Upon the Approach of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Army, the terrified Jews, entered into a ſolemn Convenant, to obſerve God's Law, and to releaſe the Hebrew Servants, which they kept in Bondage, contrary to his Law.

But when the *Chaldeans* were gone to meet *Pharaoh*, the general Opinion being, that they would return no more; the Jews openly violated the Convenant of Reformation, by obliging all their Servants to return to their former Servitude; for which impious Act, the Prophet proclaimed *Liberty to the Sword*, &c.

Jeremiah, Chapter 37, Verſe 11 to 16.

When the *Chaldeans* were gone to meet *Pharaoh*, *Jeremiah* was releaſed out of Priſon, and intending to retire to *Anathoth* from the Calamities of the Siege, which he knew would be renewed, was taken up for a Deſerter, as he was paſſing through the Gate, and clapt in Priſon, but principally for inſiſting that the City ſhould again be beſieged, and taken by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Jeremiah, Ch, 32, 33.

While *Jeremiah* was in Priſon, the Contents of theſe Chapters were tranſacted.

Ezekiel Chap. 29. Ver. 1 to 17. 30.

Upon the Approach of the *Chaldeans*, the Egyptians treacherouſly deſerted *Zedekiah*, and returned to their own County. Upon this Occaſion *Ezekiel* denounces the Diſpleaſure of God againſt their Perfidy, predicts their Deſolution, and at length (with in forty Years, Chap. 29. ver. 13) their being reduced to one of the baſeſt Nations, inſomuch that they ſhould no more have a Prince of their own to reign over them (Chap. 30. Ver. 13,) which hath been remarkably fulfilled, even unto this Day.

Jeremiah Ch. 37. Ver. 17. to the End.

On the Retreat of the *Egyptians*, *Nebuchadnezzar* returned to the Siege of *Jeruſalem*; and it was then King *Zedekiah*, fearing the Iſſue, ſent for *Jeremiah* out of Priſon, to conſult him.

Jeremiah Ch. 38. ver. 1. to 14.

The Princes, offended at *Jeremiah*, caſt him in a low loathſome Dungeon, where he muſt have periſhed, had not *Ebed melech* gained Leave to draw him out, and to place him in a better

ter Situation in the Court of the Priſon.

JEREMIAH Ch. 39. Ver. 15, to the End.

While *Jeremiah* was in the Court of the Priſon, God by him ſent a Meſſuage of Mercy and Deliverance to *Ebed-melech*.

JEREMIAH, Ch. 38, Ver. 14 to the End.

Zedekiah again ſent for *Jeremiah* out of the Court of the Priſon into the Temple, there ſecretly to enquire of him concerning the Iſſue of the Siege.

EZEKIEL, Ch. 26. 27. 28.

Here God declares his Judgments againſt *Tyre*, for inſulting the calamitous State of *Jeruſalem* cloſely beſieged by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Obſerve the Wiſdom of *Daniel*, who though about thirty ſix, was become famous over all the Eaſt, Chap. 28, Ver. 3.

EZEKIEL, Ch. 31.

God declares his Judgments againſt *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*.

JEREMIAH Ch. 39, Ver. 1 to 11. Ch. 52, Ver. 1 to 30.

The Account of *Jeruſalem*'s being taken, with the ſubſequent Circumſtances. Upon this Occaſion the hundred and thirtieth Pſalm was compoſed.

JEREMIAH, Ch. 39, Ver. 11 to 13. Ch. 40, Ver. 1 to 7.

Nebuchadnezzar gives Charge concerning *Jeremiah* to *Nebuzaradan*, who treats him in a kind and friendly Manner.

JEREMIAH, Ch. 40. Ver. 7 to the End, Ch. 41, 42, 43, Ver. 1 to 8.

Nebuchadnezzar makes *Gedaliah* Governor of *Judea*. *Iſhmael* ſlays him. *Johanan*, &c. by Force carries *Jeremiah* into *Egypt*.

CHAP. III.

Prophets during the Captivity. Remarks upon that Event.

JEREMIAH, Chapter 43, Verſe 8 to the End. Ch. 44.

THE Prophecies contained in theſe Chapters were revealed and publiſhed to the Jews, in the Land of *Egypt*.

The Book of LAMENTATIONS.

This Book, which mournfully bewails the Deſolation of *Jeruſalem* and the Temple, was compoſed by *Jeremiah*, after that diſaſtrous Event, poſſibly in the Land of *Egypt*, where *Jeremiah* might end his Days, for we never read of his Return from thence.

EZEKIEL, Chap. 33.

The Beginning of this Chapter is upon a general Subject, and of uncertain Date. From the twenty firſt Verſe it is dated from the Time when *Ezekiel* firſt received the News of the City's being taken and deſtroyed

ed, which was eighteen Months, or a Year and an half, after the ſad Event happened.

EZEKIEL, Chap. 32.

This Prophecy againſt *Egypt* was delivered in this Year and Month.

EZEKIEL, Chapters 34, 36, 37, 38, 39.

Theſe Chapters fall under no Date till we come to the fortieth, which is dated the twenty fifth of *Jeboiachin*'s Captivity. Therefore theſe Chapters were probably delivered ſome Time between the twelfth and twenty fifth of that Captivity.

OBADIAH.

Obadiah propheſied againſt the *Edomites* for their unnatural and ſpiteful Behaviour towards the Jews, in their Diſtreſs, at the taking of *Jeruſalem*.

EZEKIEL Ch. 35.

This Prophecy againſt the *Edomites* ſeems to have been delivered on the ſame Occaſion.

DANIEL Chap. 3.

In this Year alſo *Nebuchadnezzar* ſet up his Golden Image.

EZEKIEL, Chap. 40, 41, &c. to the End of the Book.

All theſe Viſions and Prophecies, relating to the future State of the Church of God, were revealed to *Ezekiel* this Year, being the fourteenth from the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*.

EZEKIEL, Chap. 29, Verſe 17, to the End.

Nebuchadnezzar's Army, having endured great Hardſhips to the Siege of *Tyre*, which held thirteen Years, and having acquired but little on its Surrender (the Inhabitants having conveyed themſelves and their Effects into the adjacent Iſland) God, by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, promiſeth them the Spoils of *Egypt*, as a Reward for their Labour.

DANIEL, Chapter 4.

This Year *Nebuchadnezzar* had the Dream of the wonderful great Tree, and the cutting down thereof; and the next Year fell diſtracted.

JEREMIAH, Chapter 52, Verſe 31 to the End.

This Year *Nebuchadnezzar* died, and was ſucceeded by his Son, *Evil-merodach*, who releaſed *Jeboiachin*, King of *Judea*, out of Priſon, where he had been confined thirty ſeven Years, and advanced him to his Favour and Friendſhip.

Obſerve. This laſt Chapter was not written by *Jeremiah*, (ſee Ch. 51, Ver. 64.) but by *Baruch*, or *Ezra*, or whoever collected *Jeremiah*'s Prophecies into one Volume.

DANIEL, 7.

Daniel had the Viſion of the four Monarchies, and of the Kingdom of the *Meſſiah*.

DANIEL 8.

Daniel had the Viſion of the Ram and He-Goat.

DANIEL 5.

Daniel reads the Hand-writing on the Wall. *Belſhazzar* is ſlain *Darius* the *Mede* took the *Aſſyrian* Kingdom.

DANIEL 6.

Daniel being advanced by *Darius* above all the Princes, and made Prime Miniſter next to the King, raiſed ſo great Envy againſt him among the Courtiers, that they laid the Snare for him, which brought him into the Lion's Den.

DANIEL 9.

Daniel apprehending from the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, that the ſeventy Years Captivity of *Judah* were drawing to an End, makes his Prayer to God for the Reſtoration of *Jeruſalem*: In anſwer to which the Angel *Gabriel* was ſent to aſſure him of a much greater Redemption to the Jewiſh Nation, by the *Meſſiah*, at the End of ſeventy Weeks, or four hundred and ninety Years.

EZRA 1, 2.

Darius dies, *Cyrus* ſucceeds him, and by his Decree puts an End to the ſeventy Years Captivity of the Jews. This is in the firſt Chapter of *Ezra*. In the ſecond Chapter, an Account is given of the Jews that returned.

Obſerve, on the Return of *Judah* and *Benjamin* from the Babyloniſh Captivity, ſeveral of the other Tribes of *Iſrael* returned with them, out of *Aſſyria*, *Babylon* and *Media*, whither they had been before carried, *Ezra* vi. 17. Upon this joyous Occaſion the 126th Pſalm was compoſed.

EZRA 3.

The Jews begin to rebuild *Jeruſalem* and the Temple.

Remarks on the Babyloniſh Captivity.

THE whole Jewiſh Nation, both *Judah* and *Iſrael*, had all along a ſtrange Propenſity to Idolatry, even after the erecting of the Temple, and the eſtabliſhing of the Worſhip of God there in the moſt grand and ſolemn Manner; they erected *Altars to ſtrange Gods*, frequented *high Places and Groves*, conſecrated to idolatrous Worſhip, and furniſhed themſelves with Idols and Images for that Purpoſe, 2 *Chron.* iii. 1. 1 *Kings* xv. 11. 12, 13.

Beſides, their Morals were as corrupt as their Religion, even to the heinous Degree of Sodomy itſelf. What their peculiar Temptations were cannot be aſcertained. All the Endeavours of pious Kings, and all the preaching of holy Prophets, ſent by ſpecial Commiſſion from God, were ineffectual to produce a Reformation. The pious King *Hezekiah* was zealous and active in rooting out Idolatry, but *Manaſſeh* his Son and Succeſſor, reſtored it in the higheſt and moſt flagitious Degree of Profaneneſs and Iniquity, even beyond that of the dark and ignorant Nations, 2 *Kings* xxi. 1 to 10. *He built up again the high Places, which* Hezekiah *had deſtroyed.*

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He was alſo a grievous Perſeccutor of all that would not conform to his idolatrous Eſtabliſhments, and *ſo ſhed innocent Blood* very much. *Amon* his Son followed his pernicious Examples, but *Joſiah* his Grandſon vigorouſly attempted a Reformation. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 24, 25, but the People never came heartily into it. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 14, &c.

Obſerve, the dreadful Calamity conſequent on theſe idolatrous Practices came upon them gradually. Firſt good King *Joſiah*, was, in Judgment upon the Land, ſlain in Battle by *Pharaoh-necho*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29. who put *Jehoahaz* that ſucceeded him, into Chains, ſent him Priſoner into *Egypt*, and laid the Land of *Judah* under a heavy Tribute, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 23. *Jehoiakim* ſucceeded, and proved a wicked and idolatrous Prince like moſt of his Predeceſſors. In his third Year, *Nebuchadnezzar* took *Jeruſalem*, and carried away Part of the Veſſels of the Houſe of God, and many of the People into Captivity. Particularly he gave Orders to *Aſhpenaz the Maſter of the Eunuchs*, that he would make Choice out of the Children of the Royal Family, and of the Nobility of the Land, ſuch as he found to be of the faireſt Countenance, and the quickeſt Parts, to be carried to *Babylon*, and there made Eunuchs in his Palace, *Daniel* i. to 4. whereby was fulfilled *Iſaiah*'s Prediction above and hundred Years before, *Iſaiah* xxxix. 7. Among theſe Youths were *Daniel*, *Hananiah*, *Miſhael*, *and Azariah*, *Dan.* i. 6, 7. Moreover the King was made a Tributary, and the whole Land reduced to Vaſſalage under the Babylonians.

A ſevere Viſitation! though it had not the proper Effect upon *Jehoiachin* the next King, who was as corrupt as his Father, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 8, 9. He had been but three Months on the Throne, when *Nebuchadnezzar* again beſieged and took *Jeruſalem*, with the King and all the Royal Family; all the moſt valuable Things in the Temple, and in the King's Treaſures, with all the mighty Men of Valour, all the Craftſmen and Smiths, he took away, leaving none in the Land but the pooreſt Sort. 2 *Kings* xxiv. 12, 13, 14. Among the reſt, *Ezekiel*, (Chap. i. ver. 1, 2.) and *Mordecai*, (*Eſther* ii. 5, 6,) were now carried Captives: Yet ſtill there was no Amendment of the Religion or Morals of the Nation. *Zedekiah*, the next and laſt King, was as bad as his Predeceſſors. 2 *Kings* xxiv. 18, 19. In about eleven Years, *Nebuchadnezzar*, after a long and cloſe Siege, took *Jeruſalem*, broke down its Walls, burnt the City and Temple, carried away all the ſacred Utenſils, and all the People, except a few of the very pooreſt to till the Ground, and reduced the whole Land of *Judea*, in a Manner, to utter Deſolation for the Sins thereof.

The Propriety of this Diſpenſation will appear, if we conſider, 1ſt, That the Lenity of God appeared in bringing this terrible Overthrow upon them ſo gradually, after a Succeſſion of Judgments from leſs to greater, for the Space of twenty-two Years, which ſhould have been a Warning

to

to them, and by Experience have convinced them, that the Threatenings denounced by the Prophets would certainly be executed.

2dly, That it is a juſt Puniſhment for their Sins; particularly of their Idolatry, whereby they forſook God, and therefore God juſtly forſook them, and delivered them into the Hands of their Enemies as *Moſes* had foretold, *Leviticus* xxvi. 30, &c.

3dly, This dreadful Calamity was the moſt effectual Means to work their Reformation, which was the End propoſed by divine Wiſdom. Now, in their Captive, diſconſolate State, they had Time, and their Calamities had a natural Tendency to give them a Diſpoſition to reflect upon the long Series of Iniquity and Perverſeneſs, which had ſubjected them to the heavieſt of God's Judgments.

Now *their own Wickedneſs corrected them, and their Back-ſlidings reproved them; now they know and ſee, that it was an evil Thing, and bitter, that they had forſaken the Lord their God, and that his Fear had not been in them*, *Iſaiah* ii. 19.

In the Land of their Captivity, the Sermons of the Prophets, declaiming with the higheſt Authority againſt prophane and vicious Practices, would ſtill be ſounding in their Ears, and their abject, wretched Condition, the Conſequence of ſuch Practices, would ſink them deep into their Hearts, and ſurely give them an utter Deteſtation of what they well knew was the Cauſe of all their grievous Sufferings.

They had ſuffered themſelves to be ſhamefully infatuated by their falſe Prophets, who had propheſied to them in *Baal*, as the moſt infallible Oracle, *Jer.* ii. 8. They were Prophets *of the Deceit of their Hearts*. *Jer.* xxiii. 26.

They had encouraged a Rabble of *Diviners*, *Dreamers*, *Enchanters*, and *Sorcerers*, who had moſt impudently impoſed upon their Credulity, aſſuring them, in the Name of the Lord too, that they ſhould not ſerve the King of *Babylon*, *Jer.* xxvii. 9. that he ſhould not come againſt them, nor againſt the Land 37, 39. *They belied the Lord, and ſaid, it is not he, neither ſhall Evil come upon us: neither ſhall we ſee Sword nor Famine*, *Jer.* v. 12.

Thus they cauſed the People to err, and their Kings, Princes, and Prieſts concurred to ſtrengthen the Deluſion. Theſe Prophets and Prieſts were Men of very wicked Lives, *Zep.* iii. 4. *They committed Adultery walked in lies, ſtrengthened the Hands of evil Doers*, ſo that none returned from Wickedneſs, *Jer.* xxiii. 14.

They perſecuted and murdered the Juſt in the Midſt of *Jeruſalem*, *Lam.* iv. 13. From them Prophaneneſs went forth into all the Land, *Jer.* xxiii. 15. See a more particular Deſcription of the Wickedneſs of the Land, *Ezek.* xxii. 6 to 13.

But now where are all their falſe Prophets, with all their bold Pretenſions and flattering Promiſes? The Deluſion is now at an End, and they find themſelves moſt miſerably deceived

ceived. Their Eyes are opened and they are thoroughly convinced, that they were a Set of the vileſt Impoſtors, who had deluded them into the moſt wretched Circumſtances.

The Prophets were now become Wind, *Jer.* v. 13. and in Proportion as theſe Deceivers were deteſted, the true Prophets, who would have drawn them to a juſt Regard of God and his holy Law, would be eſteemed and honoured.

Doubtleſs the lying Prophets and Prieſts had filled their Heads with ſpecious Pretences for their idolatrous Practices, and aſſured them, they were ſtill the beloved People of God, inveſted with all the diſtinguiſhing Privileges of his Church and peculiar People, and ſecure under his Protection, with great Oſtentation and Confidence, crying out *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, are theſe* [Men or Buildings.] *Jer.* vii. 4.

But now they found all their Sophiſtry to be lying Words, and could no longer take Aſſurance from their peculiar Privileges, or their magnificent Temple, when their Temple and City were both deſtroyed, and themſelves caſt into a heathen Land, where they were ſo long and ſo ſhamefully ſtript of all their peculiar Honours.

In ſhort, no Method could have been deviſed more proper to give this People a fixed Deteſtation of Idolatry, and the vile Arts by which they were ſeduced into it; and it had this remarkable Effect; They never more fell into Idolatry, but retain the greateſt Abhorrence of it unto this Day.

4thly. The Law of God, written by *Moſes*, as the Rule of their Conduct in all Affairs civil and religious, and the Ground of their Happineſs, they had ſo far neglected, that once it was almoſt unknown and loſt among them. 2 *Kings* xxii. 8 to 17. This Contempt of the Divine Law, the Prophets had frequently and ſtrongly proteſted againſt, and publickly declared it would prove their Ruin.

Therefore in their ruined State this muſt be remembered, as the primary Reaſon of all their Sufferings, and they muſt be thoroughly ſenſible, that a due Regard to the Law of God was the only Way to recover his Favour, and their own Proſperity, and accordingly muſt be diſpoſed to be attentive to it; for *Ezra* after the Captivity, found ſo little Difficulty in introducing the publick reading of the Law, that the People themſelves called for it, *Neh.* viii. 1, 2, 3, &c. *Ezra* was a ready Writer of the Law of God, *Ezra* vii. 6, &c. and active in propagating the Knowledge of it.

Doubtleſs he wrote, or directed to be written, ſeveral Copies of the Law to be diſperſed into proper Hands; and whereas before the Captivity they had no Synagogues for publick Worſhip and Inſtruction, nor any Places to reſort to for either, unleſs the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, or the Cities of the *Levites*, or to the Prophets, when God was pleaſed to ſend them; thus Ignorance grew among

among the People, but after the Captivity, Synagogues were erected among them in every City, where the Law was read every Sabbath, and other Acts of Devotion performed. It was indeed the moſt effectual Method of preſerving the Knowledge of God and his Law, and a Senſe of their Duty.

This then was another good Effect of this Diſpenſation, and may juſtly be offered as one good Reaſon of their being ſo ſtrongly fixed againſt Idolatry, ever after the Babyloniſh Captivity.

5. This Diſpenſation was alſo calculated to produce good Effects among the Nations, whither they were carried into Captivity; for wherever they were diſperſed in the Eaſtern Countries, they would bring with them the Knowledge of the true God, now ſeriouſly impreſt upon their Hearts.

But divine Providence, by ſuch ſignal Circumſtance of his Interpoſition, as were publiſhed and known over all the vaſt extent of the Eaſtern Empire, raiſed ſome of the captive Jews to the higheſt Poſts of Dignity and Power in the Courts of *Aſſyria* and *Perſia*, *Dan.* i. 19, 20. inſomuch that the moſt haughty Monarchs openly confeſſed the living and true God, as the only and ſupreme God, *Dan.* ii. 47, &c. and made Decrees that were publiſhed throughout their ſpacious Dominions, in Favour of the Profeſſion and Worſhip of that God, *Dan.* iii. 29.

The Affair of Queen *Eſther* and *Mardecai*, and the Decree of the renowned *Ahaſuerus*, in Favour of the Jews in his Empire, conſiſting of one hundred and twenty-ſeven Princes, muſt not only have given the Jews every where great Diſtinction and Honour, but alſo have rendered the great God more known, and his Religion more reſpectable, inſomuch that we find many of the People of the Land, many of the *Perſians*, became Jews, or Proſelytes to the Jewiſh Religion.

The great *Cyrus* was ſo well acquainted with the true God, that as one of his firſt Acts, after he was advanced to the Empire of *Perſia*, he made a Decree for the Return of the Jews into their own Country, and for the Rebuilding of the Temple. *Ezra* i. 1 to 5.

From theſe Circumſtances it is clear, that the Jews, notwithſtanding their Depravity in their own Country, during the Captivity of ſeventy Years, muſt have been a burning and a ſhining Light all over the Eaſtern Countries. And thus in this Diſpenſation alſo, God the Father and Governor of Mankind, was working for the Reformation and Improvment of the World, in that which is the true Excellency of their Nature, and the only Foundation of their Happineſs.

CHAP.

CHAP IV.

Prophets after the Captivity. Deſcription of the Jewiſh Ritual, or Ceremonial Law.

EZRA, Chapter 4.

THE *Samaritans* obſtruct the Jews in the Building of the City and Temple; ſo that the Work ceaſed till the ſecond Year of *Darius Hyſtaſpes*, namely, for the Space of Fourteen Years.

DANIEL 10, 11, 12.

The Viſions and Prophecies in theſe Chapters were revealed to *Daniel* in the third Year of *Cyrus*, and the third Year after the Captivity.

HAGGAI, Chapter 1. Verſe 1 to 12.

Haggai excites *Zerubbabel*, the Governor, and *Jeſhua*, the High-prieſt, to build the Lord's Houſe in the ſecond Year of *Darias Hyſtaſpes*.

HAGGAI, Chapter 1. Verſe 12 to the End. EZRA, Chap. 5. Ver. 1, 2.

Zerubbabel and *Jeſhua* immediately apply to the Work.

HAGGAI 2. Ver. 1 to 10.

Haggai encourageth them from the Lord to proceed.

ZECHARIAH, 1. Ver 1 to 7.

Zechariah make his firſt Addreſs to the Jews, who were building the Temple, aſſuring them that God would turn to them with a Bleſſing, if they turned to him with Repentance and Reformation.

HAGGAI 2, Ver. 10 to the End.

Haggai rebukes the Indifference of the Jews in building the Temple; encourages vigorous Endeavours with the Bleſſing of Plenty; and aſſures *Zerubbabel* of the extraordinary Favour of God.

ZECHARIAH 1. Ver. 7 to the End, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

At this Time theſe Viſions greatly encouraged the Jews in building the City and Temple, and aſſuring them of the divine Protection againſt all their Enemies, were revealed to *Zechariah*.

EZRA 5. Ver. 3 to the End.

The *Samaritans* again diſturb the Jews, and put a Stop to the Building of the Temple.

EZRA 6. Ver. 1 to 15.

Darius ſends a Decree to *Jeruſalem* poſitively ordering the Temple to be rebuilt, and the Expences of it furniſhed out of the Taxes laid on the Provinces; which accordingly was done, till it was finiſhed.

ZECHARIAH 7, 8.

The Jews who were in *Babylon*, (for great Numbers ſtill remained there, and in others Parts of the *Perſian* Empire) judging that the State of *Judea* and *Jeruſalem* was now ſo throughly reſtored and eſtabliſhed by *Darius*'s Decree, that it might be no

no longer proper to keep the Faſt in the fifth Month (when the City and Temple were built by *Nebuchadnezzar*) which they had hitherto obſerved for ſeventy Years together, ſent two Meſſengers to *Jeruſalem* to ask the Opinion of the Prieſts and Prophets that were there, about this Matter.

God therefore gave them by the Prophet *Zechariah* the Anſwer relating to that, and other Faſts, which we have in the ſeventh and eighth Chapters of this Prophecy.

ZECHARIAH, 9. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

As theſe Chapters have no Date, we may ſuppoſe they were delivered in ſome of the Times ſubſequent to the fourth Year of *Darius Hyſtaſpes*.

EZRA 6. Ver. 15 to the End.

This Year the Temple was finiſhed, with great Joy and Solemnity. The Jews had been about it, from firſt to laſt, twenty Years.

ESTHER 1.

Artaxerxes, or *Ahaſuerus*, being entirely ſettled in his Throne, made a great Feaſt for all his Nobles, and divorced *Vaſhti* his Queen.

ESTHER 2. Ver. 1 to 16.

A Collection of Virgins made for the King, of whom *Eſther* was one.

EZRA 7, 8, 9, 10.

In the beginning of this Year, *Erza* received from *Artaxerxes* a very ample Commiſſion for his Return to *Jeruſalem*, with any of his Countrymen that were diſpoſed to accompany him; giving them full Authority in Things both Civil and Religious, to regulate both according to the Law.

The Decree was probably granted at the Solicitation of *Eſther*. The Decree, the Families, and Numbers of the Jews that went with *Ezra* to *Jeruſalem*, fall within the Compaſs of theſe four Chapters.

Note, From *Ezra*'s entering upon this Work, the beginning of *Daniel*'s ſeventy Weeks is to be computed.

Note alſo, That *Ezra* continued in the Government about thirteen Years, till *Nehemiah* ſucceeded him in the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes*, or *Ahaſuerus*.

ESTHER 2. Ver. 16 to 21.

Eſther having been only Concubine about two Years, is now made Queen.

ESTHER 2. Ver. 21 to the End.

Bigthan and *Tareſh*, two Ennuchs in the Palace, entered into Conſpiracy againſt the Life of *Artaxerxes*, or *Ahaſuerus*, which was diſcovered to the King by *Mordecai*, Queen *Eſther*'s Uncle.

ESTHER 3, 4, 5. &c. to the End of the Book.

Haman, an *Amalekite*, deſcended from King *Agag*, in *Saul*'s Time, made Prime Miniſter to *Artaxerxes*, laid a Plot to extirpate the whole Race of the Jews. But it turned upon

on himſelf, as related in the Book of *Eſther*.

NEHEMIAH 1, 2, 3, &c. to the End of the Book.

Nehemiah, with a Commiſſion from *Artaxerxes*, or *Ahaſuerus*, probably by Favour of Queen *Eſther*, (*Neh.* ii. 6.) ſucceeded *Ezra* in the Government of *Judea*, rebuilds the Walls, re-peoples the City, reforms Diſorders, &c. Thus he was employed for twelve Years, namely from the twentieth to the thirty-ſecond Year of *Artaxerxes*, *Neh.* v. 14.

Within this Time *Ezra* is ſuppoſed to have publiſhed his Edition of the Hebrew Scriptures. See *Prideaux*'s Connection Page 475. *Nehemiah* returned from *Jeruſalem* to the *Perſian* Court, *Neh.* xiii. 16.

Note. About this Time flouriſhed *Malachi* the Prophet.

NEHEMIAH 13. Ver. 6, 7, &c.

After *certain Days*, that is, after about five Years, *Nehemiah* returned to *Jeruſalem*, with a new Commiſſion, and made a further Reformation, with which Act of Reformation the Holy Scriptures of the Old Teſtament are cloſed.

Simon the Juſt, High-Prieſt of the Jews, completes the Canon of the Old Teſtament, by adding the *two Books of Chronicles*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Eſther*, and *Malachi*. "That theſe "could not be put into the Canon "by *Ezra* is plain; for four of them "upon juſt Grounds, where ſup-"poſed to have been written by him, "that is the two Books of *Chroni-*

"*cles*, and the Books of *Ezra* and "*Eſther*) and the Book of *Nehemiah* "was written after his Time, and "ſo in all Probability was the Book "of *Malachi*; therefore a later Time "muſt be aſſigned for this Inſertion "into the ſacred Canon; and no "Perſon is more likely than *Simon* "*the Juſt*, who is ſaid to have been "the laſt of the Men of the great "Synagogue.

"What the Jews call the Great "Synagogue, were a Number of "Elders, amounting to one hun-"dred and twenty, ſucceeding each "other in a continued Series, from "the Return of the Jews from the "Babyloniſh Captivity, to the Time "of *Simon the Juſt*, who ſtrenuouſly "laboured in reſtoring the Jewiſh "Church and State.

"In order to this, the holy Scrip-"tures being the Rule by which "they were to go; their chief Care "and Study was to make a faithful "Collection of thoſe Scriptures, and "publiſh them accurately to the "People.

"*Ezra*, and the Men of the Great "Synagogue, in his Time, ſettled "the Canon of all but the aforeſaid "Books, and theſe were probably "ſettled and added to the Canon in the "Time of *Simon the Juſt*, who died "about thirty-one Years after *Alex-*"*ander the Great*; for, in 1 *Chron.* "iii. 19, &c. the Genealogy of the "Sons of *Zerubbabel* is carried down "for ſo many Deſcents after him, "as may well be thought to reach to "the Time of *Alexander*.

" In *Nehemiah* xii. 22. we have " the Days of *Jaddua*, ſpoken of as " then paſt; but *Jaddua* out lived " *Alexander* two Years.

" Theſe paſſages, therefore, were " probably inſerted by *Simon the* " *Juſt*, who perfected and finally " ſettled the Canon of the holy Scrip- " tures.

" After this followed the Times " of Traditions. Hitherto the Scrip- " tures were the only Rule of Faith " and Manners, which God's Peo- " ple ſtudied; but thenceforth Tra- " ditions began to be regarded, till " at length they overbore the Word " of God itſelf, as we find in the " Time of our Bleſſed Saviour.

" The Collection of theſe Tradi- " tions they called the *Miſhnah*, that " is, the ſecond Law; and thoſe " who delivered and taught them, " were ſtiled the *miſhnical* Doctors."

See *Prideux*'s Con. *Ptolomy Soter.*

Deſcription of the Jewiſh Ritual, or Ceremonial Law.

WE muſt now turn back to the *Moſaic* Conſtitution, which conſiſted,

1ſt, Of Political and Judicial Laws.

2d. Of Moral Precepts, ſuch as the Ten Commandments.

3d. Of Rites and Ceremonies, ſuch as Circumciſion, Sacrifices, Waſhings, Purifications, the Uſe of certain Garments, &c. and divers Rites uſed by the Prieſts in the Tabernacle.

We ſhall obſerve in general, that the Deſign of thoſe Ceremonies, juſtly explained, was to convey religious and moral Inſtructions, as well as the expreſs Precepts.

Hieroglyphics, which repreſent the Senſe of the Mind, by outward Figures of Actions, were the firſt and moſt antient Literature.

So the Government of the World, by divine Providence, and its extraordinary Interpoſition in Favour of good Men, is repreſented by a Ladder, ſtanding upon the Earth, and reaching to Heaven, with the Angels aſcending and deſcending on it, to receive and execute orders from God above, who ruleth over all, *Gen.* xxviii. 12, 13.

In the Stile of this Hieroglyphic our Lord ſpeaks, *John* i. 51. *Hereafter ſhall ye ſee Heaven open, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of Man.* Meaning, you ſhall ſee an extraordinary divine Interpoſition, working in my Favour, by many miraculous Operations.

The Exaltation of *Joſeph* above the

the reſt of the Family, was repreſented by the Hieroglyphic of his Sheaf ſtanding upright, and the eleven Sheaves of his Brethren ſtanding round about, and bowing to it. As alſo of the Sun, and Moon, and eleven Stars, making Obeiſance to him *Gen.* xxxvii. 7, 9.

The Tribe of *Judah* is repreſented by a young Lion; *Iſſachar*, by a ſtrong Aſs; *Dan*, by a Serpent lurking in the Road; *Napthali*, by a Hind; *Joſeph*, by a frightful Bough; *Benjamin*, by a ravening Wolf, *Gen.* xlix. 9, 14, &c.

A Rod or Staff, as it is an Inſtrument of Striking or beating down, is the Hieroglyphic of Power exerted in conquering, puniſhing and ruling *Iſa.* x. 5, 24. With ſuch a Rod *Moſes* and *Aaron* appeared before *Pharaoh*, as hieroglyphically repreſenting the Power and Authority of God, in whoſe Name they demanded the Releaſe of the *Iſraelites*, *Exod*, vii. 15. Thus they appeared as Men of Learning, and acted agreeably to the Literature of the Age.

A Horn, repreſented temporal Power and Dominion, 1 *Sam.* ii. 10. *Pſalm* lxxxix. 24.

A Yoke, ſuch as Slaves carried upon their Shoulders; Servitude or Bondage. *Gen.* xxvii. 37, 40.

This may ſerve to explain the Nature of Hieroglyphics, a Sort of Language to which the Jews were then accuſtomed; being the Learning of that Age, which they would underſtand much better than abſtract Reaſonings, about moral Truths and Duties.

We may therefore, on this Account, well admit, that the Rites and Ceremonies of their Religious Inſtitution were hieroglyphic, and intended by external Repreſentations to give them uſeful Inſtruction in true Religion and real Goodneſs.

If we conſult the Prophets and Apoſtles, who were well acquainted with their Meaning, we ſhall find ſo much Evidence of the moral and ſpiritual Intention of ſo many, as may induce us to believe, this was the Senſe and Spirit of all the reſt.

They were enjoined frequent and various Ablutions, or Waſhings with Water; the common Uſe of which is to diſcharge the Body from all Dirt and Filth, and to keep it clean.

This was a very eaſy Repreſentation of Purity of Mind, or of an Heart purged from Filth and Sin. In this Manner the Prophets underſtood it, *Pſalm* li. 2. *Waſh me from mine Iniquity.* Ver. 7. *Waſh me, and I ſhall* be clean. Iſaiah i. 6. *Waſh yourſelves make yourſelves clean; put away the Evil of your Doings.*

Anointing with Oil, or Ointment, by which the Head was beautified, and the Countenance exhilarated, had the Signification of Honour, Joy, Holineſs, a Inſpiration, *Pſalm* xlv. *Acts* x. 38. The Prieſts officiated in Garments of fine Linen, *Exodus*, xxxix. 27, meaning, that the Prieſts ſhould *be cloathed*, or have their Souls adorned *with Righteouſneſs.*

Burning of Incenſe, whoſe Smoke riſeth up with a pleaſant Smell, was an hieroglyphic Repreſentation of acceptable

ceptable Prayer, *Pſ.* cxli. 2. *Luke* i. 10.

Circumciſion had Relation to the Heart and Soul, or to the Retrenching all inordinate Affections and Inclinations, *Lev.* xxvi. 41. *Rom.* ii. 29.

The Sprinkling of Blood, and of the Water of Separation (*Numb.* xix. 13, 19.) was hieroglyphic and had a moral Signification, See *Heb.* ix. 13, 14. 1 *Pet.* i. 2. As had likewiſe the muzzled Mouth of the Ox, *Deut.* xxv. 4. compared with 1 *Cor.* ix. 9, 10. 1 *Tim.* v. 17, 18.

Some Perſons have indulged too much to Imagination, and pretended to have found more Myſteries in the Hebrew Ritual, than were really deſigned; but theſe Inſtances, explained by authentic Evidence, may convince us, that the whole had a Spiritual Meaning; and as we are taught in the Goſpel every Thing neceſſary to Faith and Practice, in the plaineſt Manner, we need not give ourſelves much Trouble about diſcovering the Meaning of the other Rites, which are not explained by the Prophets and Apoſtles.

But the Affair of Sacrifice is ſo often alluded to in the New Teſtament, and ſeems to have ſuch a reſpect to the Sacrifice of our Lord, that it certainly demands a more particular Examination.

CHAP. V.

Diſſertation on the Nature of Prophecy, and the Degree of Evidence, that may be reaſonably ſuppoſed to reſult from the ſame.

BEFORE we proceed, in Purſuance of our Plan to demonſtrate the fulfilment or many Prophecies relative to the Perſon, Coming, and Offices of the *Meſſiah*, we think it highly neceſſary, by Way of Introduction to the main Point, to offer ſome general Remarks, concerning the Nature and Intent of Scripture Prophecy.

Prophecy is a Light ſhining in a dark Place, and we do well to give Heed to it until the Day of Dawn, according to the Apoſtle's Meaning, 2 *Peter* i. 19. which is thus paraphraſed by a late learned and pious Prelate.

" The Time will come when the " Things you hope for ſhall be placed " in a clear Light, when you ſhall " ſee all you Expectations fully juſ- " tified in the Accompliſhment, in " the mean while ye do well to at- " tend to Prophecy, though but a " ſmall glimmering Light, and ſhi- " ning at a Diſtance in a dark Place, " yet the beſt you have or can have " at preſent."

Metaphorical Expreſſions and Similitudes ought not to be rigidly and ſtrictly canvaſſed; it is ſufficient to ſee the general Import and Meaning of them, which in the Caſe before us is very clear and amounts to this: That the Knowledge God give us of Things

Things future by the Meane of Prophecy, is but an imperfect, obſcure Knowledge, not to be compared with that clear Knowledge, which will attend the Manifeſtation of the things themſelves.

Our preſent Buſineſs ſhall be to confirm this Propoſition by the Authority of Scripture, which may ſuggeſt ſome uſeful Obſervations concerning the Nature of Prophecy and the Evidence ariſing from it.

If we look into the firſt Epiſtle of *Peter*, we ſhall find that the *ancient Prophecies* of which he ſpeaks in the Paſſage referred to, and which he ſtiles the *more ſure Word of Prophecy*, were not apprehended or clearly underſtood by thoſe inſpired Perſons who delivered them, for there he repreſents them, *ſearching what or what Manner of Time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified before Hand the Sufferings of Chriſt, and the Glory that ſhou'd follow*, 1 Pet. i. 11. To the ſame Purpoſe our Saviour ſpeaks, *Matt.* xiii. 17.

Many Prophets and righteous Men have deſired to ſee thoſe Things which ye ſee and have not ſeen them, &c. The Apoſtle *Paul* gives the like Account of the Gift of Prophecy under the Goſpel Diſpenſation, *Cor.* xiii. 9, 10, 12. *We know in Part and we prophecy in Part*, &c.

Now if the Prophets and righteous Men of old to whom the Word of God came, did to clearly underſtand the Things which they foretold, but employed themſelves in ſearching and examining the prophetical Teſtimonies of the Spirit which was in them; if the Prophets of the New Teſtament knew only in Part, and propheſied only in Part; it is moſt evident, that others, to all Appearnce leſs qualified than they, to underſtand the determinate Senſe of the Prophecies, could have but a confuſed and indiſtinct Notion of the Things foretold.

Prophecy is thus deſcribed by its divine Author; *I have multiplied Viſions, and uſed Similitudes by the Miniſtry of the Prophets*, Hoſea xii. 10. which Similitudes are elſewhere ſpoken of as *dark Speeches* delivered to the Prophets in *Viſions*, and in *Dreams*, Numb. xii. 6, 8. For this Reaſon the Jews when they ſpoke with Contempt of their Prophet, were uſed to ſay, *Doth he not ſpeak Parables*, Ezek. xx. 49. Our bleſſed Lord ſeems to ſpeak of the ancient Prophecies under the ſame Character; *know ye not*, ſays he to his Diſciples, *this Parable? And how then will ye know all Parables?* Mark iv. 13. That is, if ye underſtand not this plain Parable of the Sower, how will ye underſtand all the ancient Prophecies relating to the Goſpel, which are much harder *Parables?*

Theſe Paſſages are ſufficient to prove that Prohecy was never intended to be a very diſtinct Evidence; and to ſhew St. *Peter*'s Meaning in comparing *the Word of Prophecy to a Light ſhining in a dark Place*, and in making this Evidence ſo much inferior to that we are to receive, when the Fulneſs of Time comes for the Manifeſtation of God's Promiſes.

A figurative and dark Deſcription of a future Event, will be figurative and dark ſtill when the Event happens; and conſequently will have all the Obſcurity of a figurative, and dark Deſcription as well after, as before the Event. The Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes the Peace of Chriſt's Kingdom in the following Manner: *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child ſhall lead them.* Iſaiah xi. 6 It is reaſonable to think that none (ſome modern Jews excepted,) ever underſtood this Paſſage literally; nor can it now be literally applied to the Goſpel; it was and is capable of different Interpretations: It may mean temporal Peace: But whatever the true Meaning is, this Prophecy does no more obtrude one determinate Senſe upon the Mind ſince the coming of Chriſt than it did before.

It is abſurd therefore to expect clear and evident Conviction from every ſingle Prophecy applied to Chriſt, as the Evidence muſt ariſe from a View and Compariſon of all together.

Prophecies are not all of one Kind, or of equal Clearneſs; the moſt literal Prophecies relating to Chriſt were not always at the Time of the Delivery the plaineſt; for many of theſe relating to the moſt ſuprizing and wonderful Events under the Goſpel, wanted not the Veil or Cover of figurative Language. *A Virgin ſhall conceive a Son,* was a Propoſition which ſeemed to want ſome other Interpretation than a literal one, which was totally inconſiſtent with all Inſtances of former Experience; and therefore probably this Prophecy was not underſtood by the ancient Jews, as importing a miraculous Conception.

The Event has not made this Prophecy clearer than it was before; the Language of it was as well underſtood in the Prophet's Time as now; but common Senſe led every Man to underſtand it in a Senſe agreeable to Nature and Experience.

In like Manner the Prophecies from which the Reſurrection of Chriſt is inferred, were obſcure and dark from a ſeeming Inconſiſtency between the ſeveral Parts of them. It is foretold that Chriſt ſhould be *diſpiſed and rejected of Men,* a Man of *Sorrow* and *Affliction*; that his Affliction ſhould purſue him even to the *Grave*; and it is alſo foretold, that notwithſtanding theſe Sufferings, and a wretched Death, he ſhould *prolong his Days,* and have an *everlaſting Kingdom,* and *ſee* the Work of the Lord *proſper* in *his Hands.*

Theſe Prophecies are not all plainer now than they were in the Beginning; but the plain Senſe appeared at that Time loaded with Contradiction: Here was one born to *Miſery and Affliction,* and yet he was the Heir of an *everlaſting Kingdom:* He was *condemned, executed,* laid in the *Grave, and after all this* he was to *prolong* his *Days,* and ſee the *Work of the Lord proſper in his Hands.* The Reſurrection of Chriſt reconciled all theſe Difficulties, and ſeeming Inconſiſ-

conſiſtencies; and we now readily admit theſe Prophecies in their plain, literal Senſe, which was a very plain Senſe before, though a very hard one to be imagined or believed.

We may obſerve then, that the moſt literal Prophecies have received the greateſt Confirmation, and the moſt Light from the Event; for the Difficulty in this Caſe not lying in the Darkneſs or Obſcurity of the Expreſſion, but in the ſeeming Impoſſibility of the Thing foretold, ſuch ſeeming Impoſſibility the Event fully cleared: But no Event can make a figurative or metaphorical Expreſſion to be a plain, or literal one, or reſtrain any Prophecy to one determinate Senſe only, which was originally capable of many.

Theſe Things have been premiſed, to ſhew what kind of Evidence we ought to expect from Prophecies after their Accompliſhment. The Effect of this Argument is greatly obſtructed, when Perſons expect from it more than it will yield; an Error, into which they are drawn by hearing it often inſinuated, that Prophecy however dark and obſcure at firſt, grows extremely plain on its Accompliſhment; which, in ſome Caſes, is in Fact true; but is not, cannot be ſo in all.

This Pleading as it were for the Obſcurity of antient Prophecies, may appear ſtrange, as it may well be conceived more agreeable to the Purpoſe of a Chriſtian Divine, to maintain their Clearneſs.

Now, as *Moſes* in another Caſe ſaid, *I would to God all the Lord's People were Prophets*; it is fervently ſaid in the preſent; *Would to God all* the Prophecies of the Lord were manifeſt to all his People.

But it matters little what we wiſh for, or think beſt; we muſt be content with ſuch Light and Direction as God has thought proper to beſtow upon us; and to enquire, why the antient Prophecies, are not clearer? is like enquiring, why God has not given us more Reaſon, or made us as wiſe as Angels?

He hath graciouſly given us in both Caſes ſo much Light as he thought proper, and enough to ſerve the Ends he intended.

It is doubtleſs a Miſtake to conceive Prophecy to be intended ſolely or chiefly for their Sakes in whoſe Time the Events predicted are to happen. How low an Idea doth it give of the Adminiſtration of divine Providence, in ſending Prophets one after another, from *Adam* to *Chriſt*; to imagine that all this was for their Sakes who lived in and after the Time of Chriſt, with little Regard to whom the Prophecies were delivered?

As the Prophecies of the New Teſtament appear to be deſigned chiefly for our Sakes, who live by Faith and not by Sight; ſo the antient Prophecies appear to have had the like Uſe, and to have been chiefly intended to ſupport the Faith and Religion of the old World; for, had it been otherwiſe, a ſet of Prophecies given ſome few Years before the Birth of Chriſt, would have ſerved our Purpoſe as well as a Series of Prophecies

phecies given from the very Beginning, and running through every Age. —— If we conſider the Uſe of Prophecy, it will enable us to conceive the Degree of Clearneſs which ought to attend it.

Some Perſons are apt to ground the Truth of the Events predicted, entirely upon the Evidence of the Prophecy. They ſpeak, for Inſtance, as if they imagined the Certainty and Reality of our Saviour's Reſurrection very much concerned in the Clearneſs of the Prophecies, relating to that great and wonderful Event, and ſeem to think that they are confuting the Belief of his Reſurrection, when they are trying to confound the Prophecies relating to it.

But, can any thing be more abſurd? For what Ground or Pretence is there to enquire, whether the Prophecies foretelling that the Meſſiah ſhould die and riſe again, do truly belong to Chriſt, unleſs we are firſt ſatisfied, that Chriſt died and roſe again? We muſt be in the Poſſeſſion of the Fact, before we can form any Argument from the Prophecy; and therefore the Truth of the Reſurrection conſidered as a Fact, is quite independent of the Evidence or Authority of Prophecy.

The Part which unbelievers ought to take in this Queſtion, if they would make any Uſe of Prophecy, ſhould be to ſhew from the Prophets, that Chriſt was neceſſarily to riſe from the Dead; and then to prove, that in Fact *Jeſus* never did riſe; here would be a plain Conſequence.

But if they do not approve this Method, they ought not to meddle with the Prophecies; for if Chriſt did not riſe, there is no Harm done, if the Prophets have not foretold it: and if they allow the Reſurrection of Chriſt, what do they gain by diſcrediting the Prophecies? The Event will be what it is, let the Prophecies be what they will.

If this be the Caſe, that we muſt admit all the Facts of the Goſpel to be true, before we can come at the Evidence of Prophecy it may be aſked, What Neceſſity there is for enquiring after Prophecy at all? To which may be added, Are not the many Miracles of Chriſt, his Reſurrection from the Dead, his Aſcenſion to Heaven, the pouring forth the Gifts of the Spirit upon the Apoſtles, their ſpeaking in divers Tongues, and doing many Wonders in the Name of Chriſt, ſufficient Evidence to us of the Truth of the Goſpel, without troubling ourſelves to know whether theſe Things were foretold, or in what Manner they were foretold?

In Anſwer to this Queſtion, it is offered, that ſuch facts once admitted as Truths, are a complete Evidence of the divine Authority of a Revelation; and that if we had known no more of Chriſt, than that he claimed to be attended to as a Perſon ſent and commiſſioned by God, he needed no other Credentials than theſe already mentioned; and it would have been impertinent to demand what Prophet foretold his coming. For in a like Caſe, who foretold the coming of *Moſes* to be a Law-giver to *Iſrael*?

God

God had promiſed *Abraham* to give his Poſterity the Land of *Canaan*; but that he would give it by *Moſes* he had not promiſed: that he would talk with him *Face to Face*, and deliver his Law to him, and by him to the People, he had not foretold: the Authority therefore of *Moſes* as a divine Lawgiver, ſtands upon the miraculous Works performed by him; and the wonderful Atteſtations given to him by the Preſence of God in the Mount in the Eyes of all the People; but upon Prophecy it does not ſtand, for of him there were no Prophecies.

This ſhews that Prophecy is not an Evidence eſſential to the Proof of a a divine Revelation; for it may be ſpared in one Point as well as another. But the caſe of the Goſpel differs from that of the Law; for though the Law was not propheſied of, yet the Goſpel was. He who delivered the Law was one of the firſt who propheſied of the Goſpel, and told the People ſo long before hand, *That God would raiſe up a Prophet like unto him whom they muſt hear in all Things*. The ſucceeding Prophets ſpeak more fully of the Office, Character, Sufferings and Glory of the *Saviour* of *Iſrael*, and the *Deſire* of all Nations.

Now one of the Characters, which our bleſſed Lord conſtantly aſſumes and claims in the Goſpel, is this; that he is the Perſon ſpoken of by *Moſes* and the Prophets. Whether he is this Perſon or not, muſt be tried by the Words of Prophecy, and this makes the Argument from Prophecy ſo far neceſſary to eſtabliſh the Claim of the Goſpel; and it has been very *juſtly* as well as *accutely* obſerved, that the Proof of this Point muſt rely entirely on the Evidence of Prophecy.

Theſe Conſiderations ſhew how far the Goſpel is neceſſarily concerned in prophetical Evidence. Chriſt has done the Works which no Man ever did, and gives the fulleſt Evidence of a divine Commiſſion; but he claims to be the Perſon foretold in the Law and the Prophets; and as Truth muſt ever be conſiſtent with itſelf, this Claim muſt be true, or it deſtroys all others. This then is the Point to be tried on the Evidence of Prophecy; Is Chriſt that Perſon deſcribed and foretold under the Old Teſtament or no? Whether all the Prophecies relating to him be plain or not; Whether all the Ways uſed by the *Jews* of arguing from the Old Teſtament be convincing or not, it Matters little: the ſingle Queſtion is, Is there ſufficient plainly to ſhew us that Chriſt is the Perſon foretold under the Old Teſtament? If there is, we are at the end of our Enquiry and want no further Help from Prophecy, eſpecially ſince we, to uſe St. Peter's Expreſſion, *have ſeen the day dawn, and enjoyed the marvellous Light of the Goſpel of God*.

Obſerve, we are not now ſpeaking of the great Advantage that may be made of prophetical Evidence for convincing Unbelievers that the Truth of the Goſpel neceſſary depends upon this kind of Evidence. Theſe are two very different Enquiries: It is neceſſary for us to ſhews that Chriſt is the Perſon promiſed to be a Saviour

to *Iſrael*, and when we have ſhewn this, no Oppoſer of the Goſpel has more to demand. But we may carry our Enquiries much farther; we may contemplate all the Steps of Providence relating to the Salvation and Religion of Mankind in the ſeveral Ages of the World, and by a Compariſon of all the Parts may diſcern that Chriſt was indeed the End of the Law, and of all Promiſes made to the Fathers; that all the Deliverances wrought by God for his People were but Shadows, and as it were an earneſt of the great Deliverance he intended to give by his Son; that all the Ceremonials of the Law were repreſentations of the Subſtance of the Goſpel; that the Aaronical Sacrifices and Prieſthood were figurative of better Things to come. Of theſe Points hereafter.

With repect to the Evidence reſulting from Prophecy, it will be neceſſary to conſider the Connection in which thoſe Words of St. Peter lie, 2 Pet. i. 19.

There being evidently a Compariſon in this Text between the Word of Prophecy, and ſomething before mentioned or intended, we muſt look back in order to ſee how the Relation ſtands, and what the thing is to which *the Word of Prophecy* is compar'd and preferred.

In the Sixteenth Verſe the Apoſtle ſays, *We have not followed cunningly deviſed Fables, when we made known unto you, the Power and Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

After thus diſclaiming all Art and Deceit, in ſetting forth the Promiſes and Expectations of the Goſpel, he proceeds to declare upon what Evidence and Authority he had raiſed ſuch Expectations in them. *But* (we) *were Eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty, for he received from God the Father, Honour and Glory, when there came ſuch a Voice to him from the excellent Glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. And this Voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy Mount.*

Immediately follows the Text under Conſideration. *We have alſo a more ſure Word of Prophecy.*

This Word of Prophecy is here compared by St. *Peter* to the glimmering Light of a Candle ſeen at a Diſtance in a dark night; which tho' it gives ſome Directions, yet is nothing when compared to clear Day light. If we examine minutely into this Caſe, we ſhall find that St. Peter ſpeaks not of the Word of Prophecy, as the beſt Light or Evidence under the Goſpel; but as a Light to be attended to, only until a better comes: Obſerve his Words, *We have alſo a more ſure Word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light that ſhineth in a dark Place, until the Day dawn, and the Day Star ariſe in your Hearts.*

This Light we find is to be attended to only till the Day Light comes, ſo far is it from being itſelf the *beſt* Light, that it muſt give Way to a *better*, what the true Import and Meaning of this is we ſhall ſee hereafter; but ſurely St. *Peter* would not have

have limited any Time for their attending to the Word of Prophecy, had he been conſidering it as the beſt ſupport of Chriſtian Faith; for in that Senſe it ought ever to be attended to, and to be the conſtant Employment of a Chriſtian's Meditation, as long as Life and Thought remain with him.

Various are the Opinions of Expoſitors concerning this Paſſage; but all ſeem to have been ſenſible of the Error of ſetting up Prophecy as a ſuperior evidence to all other Goſpel Evidence; and yet without all Queſtion, the Words according to their moſt natural Senſe, import that the Evidence of Prophecy is a *ſurer* Evidence than that beforementioned; which was the Apoſtle's own Teſtimony of the Glory of Chriſt, which he had ſeen with his Eyes, and of the Voice of God, declaring Chriſt to be his beloved Son, of which the Apoſtle was an Ear-witneſs in the Mount.

But natural as this Senſe is, yet they who conclude from hence, that Prophecy is a better Evidence of the *Miſſion of Chriſt*, and the *Truth of the* Goſpel, than any other, draw a Concluſion which the Text will not juſtify.

To prove this we need but look back and ſee what is the Thing to be proved by this *more ſure* Word of Prophecy; is it the *Miſſion of Chriſt?* St. *Peter* ſays nothing of it. Is it the *Truth of the Goſpel?* Nothing leſs.

The Apoſtle tells us in the ſixteenth Verſe, that God declared *Chriſt*, by a Voice from the excellent Glory, *to be his beloved Son.* But this is not the Thing he would prove, for he brings this Declaration to prove ſomething elſe, and his Declaration is conſidered as one of the Proofs to which he compares the Word of Prophecy.

To clear this Matter, let us conſider, what it is that St. *Peter* intended to prove? For without knowing this, it is impoſſible to judge of the Compariſon in the Text; becauſe in ſome Caſes, Prophecy is no Proof, while in others, it may be our very beſt Evidence, though it be a glimmering Light, faintly ſhining through the Dark.

The ſecond Epiſtle of St. *Peter* was written to ſupport and maintain the Hopes and Expectations, which he had raiſed in his Firſt; as will be evident upon a Compariſon of the two together: to that therefore we muſt turn, in order to find the Foundation and Riſe of the Matter, to which this controverted Text in the ſecond relates.

The Chriſtians to whom the firſt Epiſtle was directed, were in a State of ſevere Trial and Perſecution, in Conſequence of which the Apoſtle adminiſters ſuitable Advice to them, and joins to his Admonitions, the Aſſurance of a certain Deliverance near at Hand.

It is very probable, that the diſtreſſed Chriſtians conceived at firſt great Hopes from theſe Aſſurances given them by an Apoſtle of Chriſt, and ex-

expected that each returning Day would bring their Deliverance with it. But when one Year after another paſſed, and no Deliverance came; when the Scoffers began to ridicule their Hopes, and aſked in Mockery, *Where is the Promiſe of his Coming?* Their Heart grew ſick, and their Hopes grew languid, inſomuch that ſome of them liſtened to corrupt Teachers, who inſtructed them to keep fair with the Word and conceal their Religious Opinions, by Means of which wicked Doctrine, they *were led away and fell from their Stedfaſtneſs*, and to avoid Suffering, *denied the Lord that bought them.*

In this State of Things, and at the Diſtance of five or ſix Years, from the writing of the firſt Epiſtle, the Apoſtle ſends his ſecond Letter, and it correſponds in every Point with this Account.

In the firſt Chapter he endeavours to re-eſtabliſh and confirm the Hopes of Believers. In the ſecond, he takes Notice of the falſe Teachers, whom he threatens with ſwift Deſtruction. In the third and laſt Chapter, he conſiders the Scoffers and their religious Inſults, *Where is the Promiſe of his Coming?*

We find therefore that the main, the only great Point in this ſecond Epiſtle is, the Coming of Chriſt in Power and Glory, to deliver the Faithful, and to take Vengeance on the Ungodly and Unbelievers, as foretold by the Apoſtles, under both Teſtaments.

The Apoſtle expreſly informeth us, that his Intention in both his Epiſtles was, to make them to whom they were ſent, *mindful of the Words which were ſpoken before of the holy Prophets*, and adds, *and of the Commandments of the Apoſtles of our Lord and Saviour*, 2 Ep. iii. 1, 2.

That this latter Part relates to the ſame Subject as the former, will appear by comparing it with 1 *Ep.* i. 12. where St. *Peter* conſiders the Apoſtles and Prophets under the Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, proving thoſe very Things which the ancient Prophets had teſtified before hand.

Now, if we uſe this Conſideration as a Key, it will infallibly enable us to clear up this Point, by proving this to be the Scope of the Apoſtle's Reaſoning, *We have not followed cunningly deviſed Fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; but were Eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty. For he received from God the Father, Honour and Glory, when there came ſuch a Voice to him from the excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. And this Noiſe, which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy Mount. — We have alſo a more ſure Word of Prophecy, &c.*

It is evident, that the *Power* and *Coming* of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* is the only Point here in queſtion; not a Word is here relating to any other Fact or Doctrine of the Goſpel. To prove this Point the Apoſtle telleth them, He had been an Eye-witneſs of his Majeſty.

Whilſt our Saviour lived on Earth, his Condition was mean, and his For-

Fortune low; this was a great Prejudice againſt him in the Opinion of the Jews, who expected greater Things from their Redeemer, and could not eaſily hope to ſee him return in *Glory* and *Power*, who lived and died ſo meanly and ſo miſerably; but it is a ſufficient Anſwer to all ſuch Prejudies, to prove, that mean as he appeared, he had a *real Majeſty*, and Glory being actually inveſted with *Honour and Glory* from God the Father.

We ſhall cloſe this Subject with the following Obſervation.

The *more ſure Word of Prophecy* here mentioned, is not to be underſtood meerly of the Prophecies of the *Old* Teſtament; for it evidently refers to the Prophecies of the *New* likewiſe, as appears in the firſt Epiſtle, where St. *Peter* appeals not only to the antient Prophets, but alſo to the Preachers of the Goſpel; and in the ſecond Epiſtle, where he ſpeaks of them together again, as joint Supporters of the Hopes of Chriſt's Coming.

How unhappily then was this Text made Choice of, to ſet up ancient Prophecy in Oppoſition to the Goſpel Evidence, ſince the Prophecy here intended, is itſelf a *Goſpel* Evidence, and ſo far from being ſuperior to all the Miracles of Chriſt, that it owes all its Authority to them.

We have been a little Particular on this Head, becauſe the Enemies of Revelation, to afford Scope for their Argument, have inſinuated, that the Evidence which Chriſtians have from Prophecy for the Certainty of their Hopes and Expectations, compared with the Evidence they have from the preaching of the Apoſtles, is the greater and ſurer Evidence; whereas the Authenticity of the former abſolutely depends on the Evidence of the latter, in all the eſſential Points relative to the ground Work of Man's Salvation by the Incarnation and Sufferings of an ever bleſſed Redeemer. What Evidence the former Diſpenſation, previous to the Coming of Chriſt receives from the latter, conſequent upon it, we hope to ſhew in the following Chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Demonſtration of the Fulfillment of the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, particularly thoſe relating to the Perſon, Coming, and Offices of the Meſſiah, interſperſed with Anſwers to divers Objections, raiſed by Unbelievers.

TO elucidate the following Subject, it is neceſſary to premiſe ſome general Remarks; as we muſt look back to the Riſe and Progreſs of divine Prophecy, to diſcover what Ends divine Wiſdom intended to ſubſerve by it. It is no *Commendation* of Prophecy, to ſay that it is very dark and obſcure, neither can it be a *Reproach*, provided it anſwers all the Ends deſigned by Providence, which we are now briefly to conſider.

Now to proceed with as much Plainneſs and Clearneſs as poſſible, we obſerve, that by *Prophecy* in its

moſt general Senſe and extenſive Latitude; we are to underſtand, "All "the Declarations, which God has "made concerning the future State "of Mankind in this World, or in "the next; conſequently, all the "Hopes and Expectations which are "grounded on God's Promiſes, and "do not reſult from Reaſon and na-"tural Knowledge, muſt be refer-"red to Prophecy, as their Ori-"ginal."

It cannot be ſuppoſed, that God has delivered Prophecies meerly to gratify or employ the Curioſity of the Inquiſitive, or that he gave Spirit to them, meerly to enable them to give forth Predictions for the Amuſement and Entertainment of the World. There muſt be ſome End intended worthy of the Author: And what End can be conſidered more worthy of God, than the Promotion of the Knowledge of his bleſſed Will, and the general Peace and Happineſs of Mankind? Theſe Things belong to him as Creator and Governour of the World: Theſe Things are his peculiar Province.

To this Aſſertion theſe Objections may be raiſed: 'Tis true indeed theſe Things do belong to God, but what has Prophecy to do with theſe Things? God can govern the World, without acquainting Men with his Secrets: He has given a plain Law to walk by, the Reſult of that Reaſon and Knowledge with which he has endowed us.

Prophecy can never contradict or over-rule the Light of Reaſon and Nature; nor can we ſuppoſe that we came ſo imperfect and unfiniſhed out of the Hands of the Creator, as not to have Light enough to ſee our own Duty, and to purſue our natural Happineſs, without an Admoniſher conſtantly before us.

Let us allow the original State of Nature to be as perfect and compleat as the Objectors can deſire, as we muſt be allowed to ſuppoſe, that ſince Man was created a moral Agent, with Freedom of Will, it was poſſible for him to fall, and conſequently poſſibly he may have fallen. Admitting this to be the Caſe, what eſſential Purpoſe can natural Religion ſubſerve? Repentance, it may be ſaid will reſtore Offenders to the divine Favour: But how often will this Remedy ſerve? Sin and Repentance may go on in a perpetual Round: To allow this differs little from allowing a Liberty and Impunity to ſin without Repentance.

If God is Governor and Judge of the World, there muſt be a Time for Judgment, and Man may, after all reaſonable and equitable Allowances made, be ripe for Judgment. Now in this Caſe, if a Man after all equitable Allowance made, be condemned under and by the Law of Nature; for what End has he Recourſe to natural Religion? He has had his Trial, and Condemnation by that Law already; and has nothing to learn from it, but the Miſery of his Condition.

To recommend natural Religion excluſively of all other Aſſiſtance, it is by no Means ſufficient to ſhew from Principles of Reaſon, the Excellency

cellency and Reaſonableneſs of moral Virtues, or to prove from the Nature of God, that he muſt delight in and reward Virtue: It muſt be proved from the Nature of Man too, that he is excellently qualified to obey this Law, and cannot well fail of attaining all the Happineſs under it, that ever Nature deſigned for him. What imports it, that the *Law* is *good*, if the *Subjects* are ſo bad that they either will not, or cannot obey it? By proving to Sinners the Excellency of natural Religion, we only ſhew how juſtly they may expect to be puniſhed for their Iniquity. A ſad Truth which wants no Confirmation!

All the Hope left in ſuch a Caſe is, that God may freely pardon and reſtore, but whether he will or no, the Offenders can never learn from Natural Religion.

This Hope therefore muſt flow from another Spring; their Confidence in God muſt and can raiſe only from the *Promiſe* of God; that is, from the *Word* of *Prophecy*; for which Reaſon Prophecy muſt for ever be an eſſential Part of ſuch Sinner's Religion.

This Reaſoning exactly agrees with the moſt authentic Account we have of the Beginning of Prophecy in the World.

When God had finiſhed all his Works, and *Man, the Chief of them*, he viewed them all, and *behold* they were *very good*. How long this Goodneſs laſted we know not; that it did not laſt very long is certain.

During the Time of Man's Innocence, there were frequent Communications between God and him; but not the leaſt Hint of any *Word* of *Prophecy* delivered to him. The Hopes of Nature were then alive and vigorous, and Man had before him the Proſpect of all that Happineſs to which he was created, to encourage and ſupport his Obedience. In this State, natural Religion wanted no other Aſſiſtance, and therefore it had no other.

But when the Caſe was altered by the Tranſgreſſion of our firſt Parents, when natural Religion had no longer any ſure Hopes or Comforts in reſerve; when God came down to judge the Offenders, and yet with Intentions finally to reſcue and preſerve them from the Ruin they had brought on themſelves; then came in the Word of Prophecy, not in Oppoſition to natural Religion, but in Support of it; and to convey *new Hopes* to Man, ſince his own were irrecoverably loſt and extinguiſhed in the Fall.

Thus have we endeavoured to trace the Ends and Deſigns of Almighty Wiſdom, in divine Prophecy, and humbly preſume we have convinced every ſerious Chriſtian, that it was given for the Promotion of the Knowledge of God himſelf, and the general Peace and Happineſs of Mankind; and, upon the whole, as a concurrent Teſtimony of the Truth of that Revelation on which depends our future and eternal Salvation.

We ſhall now begin the Proſecution of the main Point, with conſidering

dering that Prophecy, which appears to be the Ground-work and Foundation of all that have been ſince.

It may perhaps be expected that the Way ſhould be cleared to this Enquiry, by removing the Difficulties which ariſe from the Hiſtorical Narration of the Fall; and could any Thing material be added in Support of what is *commonly ſaid* upon this Subject, the Time and Pains would be well beſtowed.

But the oftener this Caſe is conſidered in all its Circumſtances, the more will the commonly received Interpretation prevail, which is evidently the true and antient Interpretation of the Jewiſh Church, as appears from the Alluſion to the Hiſtory of the Fall, to be met with in the Books of the Old Teſtament.

Waving therefore an attempt that would be productive of no real Advantage, we muſt demand the ſame Equity of all in interpreting the Senſe of *Moſes*, as all would certainly uſe toward any other antient Writer, which, if allowed, this plain Fact undeniably ariſes from the Hiſtory, "That Man was tempted to "Diſobedience, and did diſobey, and "forfeited all Title to Happineſs, and "to Life itſelf; that God judged him, "and the *Deceiver* likewiſe, under "the Form of a Serpent".

Upon this Fact therefore we proceed to conſider the Prophecy before us.

The Words are theſe, *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between her Seed and thy Seed; it ſhall bruiſe thy Head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his Heel*, Gen. iii. 15.

Chriſtian Writers apply this to our bleſſed Lord and Saviour, emphatically ſtiled here The Seed of the Woman, and who came in the Fullneſs of Time to bruiſe the Serpent's Head, by deſtroying the Works of the Devil, and reſtoring thoſe to the Liberty of the Sons of God, who were held under the Bondage and Captivity of Sin.

Our Firſt Parents were now in a State of Sin, ſtanding before God to receive Sentence for their Diſobedience, and had Reaſon to expect a full Execution of the Penalty threatened, *In the Day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.*

But God came in Mercy as well as Judgment, propoſing not only to puniſh but reſtore Man. The Judgment is awful and ſevere; the Woman is doomed to Sorrow in Conception; the Man to Sorrow and Travel all the Days of his Life, and the End of the Judgment is, *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return.*

Had they been thus left, it is highly reaſonable to think, there could have been no Religion left in the World; for Senſe of Religion without Hope, is a State of Phrenzy and Diſtraction, void of all Inducements to Love and Obedience, or any Thing elſe that is Praiſe-worthy. If therefore God intended to preſerve them as Objects of Mercy, it was abſolutely neceſſary to communicate ſo much Hope to them, as might be

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a rational Foundation for their future Endeavours to reconcile themſelves to him by better Obedience.

This ſeems to be the primary Intention of this firſt divine Prophecy, and it was abſolutely neceſſary to the State of the World, and the Condition of Religion, which could not poſſibly have been ſupported without the Communication of ſuch Hopes. The Prophecy therefore is excellently adapted to this Purpoſe, and manifeſtly conveyed ſuch Hopes to our firſt Parents; though it was in the Phraſe of St. *Peter*, but a Light ſhining in a dark Place.

All that they could with Certainty infer from it was, that their Caſe was not deſperate; that ſome Remedy, ſome Deliverance from the Evil they were under would in Time appear; but *when*, or *where*, or by what Means, they could not underſtand.

However, upon the Whole we may venture to pronounce, that this Promiſe or Prophecy, though ſurrounded with all this Obſcurity, is a Foundation for Religion and Truſt and Confidence towards God after the Fall, in Hopes of Deliverance from the Evils introduced by Diſobedience.

If any are deſirous of knowing, whether this Prophecy in the obvious and moſt natural Meaning of it, in that Senſe wherein our firſt Parents and their Children after them, might eaſily underſtand it, has been verified by the Coming of Chriſt; it is preſumed it may be clearly proved, that all the Expectation raiſed by this Prophecy has been completely anſwered by the Redemption wrought by Chriſt Jeſus: and what more can be deſired than to ſee a Prophecy fulfilled exactly?

This Prophecy is urged further by Chriſtian Writers, who ſhew from the Terms of it, that Chriſt is therein particularly foretold: He properly is the *Seed of the Woman*, in a Senſe which no other ever was, his Sufferings were well prefigured by the bruiſing of the Heel, his complete Victory over Sin and Death, by *bruiſing the Serpent's Head*.

Though we readily allow that the Expreſſions do not neceſſarily imply this Senſe, yet ſince this Prophecy has been plainly fulfilled in Chriſt, and by the Event appropriated to him alone; we may demand, if it is abſurd in us to ſuppoſe, that God, to whom the whole Event was known from the Beginning, ſhould make Choice of ſuch Expreſſions, as naturally conveyed ſo much Knowledge as he intended to convey to our Firſt Parents?

However the Wiſdom of Man may deſpiſe this Method, there is nothing in it unbecoming the Wiſdom of God; and when we ſee this to be the Caſe, not only in this Inſtance, but in many other Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, it is not without Reaſon that we conclude, that under the Obſcurity of antient Prophecy, there was an Evidence of God's Truth kept in reſerve, to be made manifeſt in due Time.

Upon the Whole, this Prophecy was the Grand Charter of God's Mercy, after the Fall. Nature had no-

certain Help for Sinners liable to Condemnation; her Right was loſt with her Innocence. It was neceſſary therefore, either to deſtroy the Offenders, or to ſave them, by raiſing them to a Capacity of Salvation, by giving them ſuch Hopes as might enable them to exerciſe reaſonable Religion.

So far the Light of Prophecy extended; by what Means God intended to work his Salvation, he did not expreſly declare; and who has a Right to complain that he did not, or to preſcribe to him Rules in diſpenſing his Mercy to the Children of Men?

This Prophecy, we, upon whom the latter Days are come, have ſeen verified more fully than thoſe to whom it was delivered could perhaps conceive. View it therefore with reſpect to them, and you will find it anſwered their Want. View it with Reſpect to ourſelves, and you find that it anſwers our Expectations; wherefore then complain we of its Obſcurity?

As we ſhall rather confine ourſelves to clear and diſtinct Prophecies, and ſuch as nearly relate to God's great Diſpenſation of Mercy and Goodneſs toward Mankind, manifeſted by the Revelation of his Son, we paſs on to the important Period, which begins at the Call of *Abraham*, and runs through the Law and the Prophets, ending where the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus commences.

How ſoon the World after the Deluge corrupted their Ways and loſt the Knowledge of the true God, *and changed the Glory of the incorruptible —into an Image made like to corruptible Man*, we cannot certainly know; but this we certainly know, that in *Abraham*'s Time, Idolatry had ſpread far and wide, and taken deep Root even in the Family of *Shem*, and in that Branch of it particularly, from which *Abraham* deſcended.

This being the Caſe, it is highly probable, that true Religion had entirely failed in the World, had not God viſibly interpoſed to preſerve ſuch a Senſe of it, as was neceſſary for the Accompliſhment of his great Deſign to reſtore Mankind.

When *Abraham* was called, and received the Promiſes, he had Aſſurance given him not only of peculiar Bleſſing to himſelf and Poſterity, but likewiſe of a general Bleſſing to be conveyed through him to Mankind, *I will make of thee*, ſays God, *a great Nation, and will bleſs thee, and make thy Name great, and thou ſhalt be a Bleſſing. And I will bleſs them that bleſs thee, and curſe him that curſeth thee.* Immediately it follows, *And in thee ſhall all Families of the Earth be bleſſed*, Gen xii. 2, 3. It is of great Importance in the preſent Caſe to diſtinguiſh rightly theſe Promiſes.

The Promiſe of temporal Proſperity to *Abraham* and his Poſterity, is ſufficiently explained in the Courſe of his Story. Theſe were great Promiſes, and great Inducements to Obedience; but, except the particular Gift of the Land of *Canaan*, there was nothing in them pecuilar to *Abraham* and his Poſterity only.

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Thus far then the Promiſe to *Abraham*, appears to be derived from the temporal Covenant eſtabliſhed with *Noah* and his Sons after the Flood, in which other Nations and People had a Share as well as himſelf: but if we look forward, we ſhall ſee the Diſtinction between the ſeveral Promiſes grown plain, when God renews the Covenant, and limits the *peculiar bleſſing* of *Abraham* to the Son, which ſhould be born of *Sarah* his Wife.

In the 17th of *Geneſis*, the Lord appears to *Abraham*, and ſays, *I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect.* Then follows, *I will make my Covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly—and thou ſhalt be a Father of many Nations.*

At the 7th Verſe God promiſes to eſtabliſh an *everlaſting* Covenant with him, and his Seed to give him and them all the *Land of Canaan for* an *everlaſting Poſſeſſion*, and to be their God.

Here are either two Covenants, mentioned together in the Compaſs of a few Lines, or elſe the ſame Covenant repeated with this Difference, that in the laſt Place it is ſtiled an *everlaſting* Covenant, and the Land of *Canaan* is aſſigned for an *everlaſting* Poſſeſſion, with this remarkable Addition, that God promiſes to be the God of *Abraham*, and of his Seed after him.

This is the firſt Time that this peculiar Character aſſumed by God, of being the God of *Abraham*, and of his Seed, occurs in Scripture, and it is evidently connected with the Promiſe of the *everlaſting* Covenant; which Connection ſeems to be the true Foundation of our Saviour's Argument, from this Expreſſion, to prove the Reſurrection of the Dead, as the Connection of the Land of *Canaan*, to the *everlaſting* Covenant, ſeems to be the Reaſon of treating the Land of *Canaan* as a Type or Sign of Heaven.

The Diſtinction of the two Covenants, in the Caſe of *Iſhmael*, the Son of *Hagar* the *Egyptian*, and *Iſaac*, the Son of *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s Wife, made by God himſelf, is the Foundation of St. *Paul*'s Argument to the *Galatians*, *It is written*, ſays he, *that* Abraham *had two Sons, the one by a Bondmaid, the other by a free Woman. But he who was of the bond Woman, was born after the Fleſh; but he of the free Woman was born by Promiſe. Which Things are an Allegory, for theſe are two Covenants*, Gal. iv. 22, 23. 24.

Whoever is capable of conſidering what is related concerning this Matter in the Book of *Geneſis*, will evidently ſee, that there are indeed two Covenants, and two ſuch Covenants as fully juſtify the Apoſtle's Reaſoning upon this Point.

What diſtinct Notion *Abraham* had of the Bleſſing promiſed to all Nations through him and his Seed? what he thought of the Manner and Method by which it ſhould be effected, we cannot pretend to affirm. But that he underſtood it to be a Promiſe of reſtoring Mankind, and delivering them from the remaining Curſe

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of the Fall, there can be little Doubt. He knew that Death had entered by Sin; He knew that Death had promiſed Victory and Redemption to the Seed of the Woman.

Upon the Hopes of this Reſtoration, the Religion of his Anceſtors was founded; and when God, from whom this Bleſſing upon *all Men* was *expected*, did expreſly promiſe a Bleſſing *on all Men*, and in this Promiſe founded his everlaſting Covenant; what could *Abraham* elſe expect, but the Completion in his Seed of that antient Promiſe and Prophecy concerning the Victory to be obtained by the Seed of the Woman?

The Bleſſings belonging to the ſpecial Covenant, given to *Abraham* and his Seed were reſerved to be revealed in God's appointed Time. The Prophets under the Law could not be commiſſioned to declare theſe Bleſſing only and nakedly, without anticipating the Time of their Revelation. Hence it is that the Predictions concerning Chriſt and his Kingdom, are cloathed in ſuch Figures, as were proper to rouſe the Hope and Attention of the People. without carrying them beyond the Bounds of Knowledge, preſcribed by God to the Age of the Jewiſh Covenant.

The Goſpel is not founded on temporal Promiſes; ſo far from it that we are called upon to take up our Croſs and follow Chriſt. The bringing in of better hopes has vacated the promiſe, of the Moſaic Covenant, and it is expected of us, after ſo much Light given, that our Faith ſhould be proof againſt the Adverſities of the World, without the Help of a Prophet to foretel or reveal to us, in every Inſtance the Counſel of God. Thoſe Prophecies, which relate to the great Truſt veſted with the *Jews*, even the *Hopes of Redemption*; which were to be a Bleſſing to all the Nations of the Earth are Events, in which we are highly concerned, and which will deſerve our particular Conſideration.

The next Limitation of the ſpiritual Covenant is to the Tribe of *Judah* in that famous Prophecy delivered by *Jacob* juſt before his Death; *The Sceptre ſhall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until* Shiloh *come, and unto him ſhall the gathering of the People be.* Gen xlix. 10.

There are ſo many Interpretations of this Prophecy, ſome peculiar to the Jews, and ſome to the Chriſtians; that we ſhall not enter into the Deciſion of them at preſent; but take the whole Prophecy relating to the Tribe of *Judah* together; and there will be enough to anſwer our immediate Purpoſe, without entering into theſe Obſcurities.

Judah, ſays *Jacob*, *thou art he whom thy Brethren ſhall praiſe; thy Hand ſhall be in the Neck of thine Enemies: thy Father's Children ſhall bow down before thee,* Gen. xlix 8.

In a Form of Words not unlike this, the peculiar Bleſſing was appropriated to *Shem*; *Japhet ſhall dwell in the Tents of* Shem, *and* Canaan *ſhall be his Servant*, Gen. ix. 26.

When *Jacob* himſelf had the Bleſſing

ſing of *Abraham* ſettled upon him by his Father *Iſaac*, in Preference to his Brother *Eſau*, the very Words in which the Grant was made to him, are theſe: *Let People ſerve thee, and Nations bow down to thee; be thou Lord over thy Brethren, and let thy Mother's Sons bow down to thee*, Gen. xxvii. 29.

Now when *Jacob* partly uſes theſe very Words, partly others of like Import, can he be underſtood to beſtow any other Bleſſing on his Son *Judah* than that very Bleſſing which he in the ſame Form of Words, received from his Father?

The next and laſt Limitation of the ſpecial Promiſe is to the Family of *David*; a Point ſo unconteſted, that there is no room to call it in Queſtion, without rejecting the Authority of all the Promiſes, and ſo plain withal that it needs no proving.

Here the Promiſe reſted until it fell upon him, for whom it was reſerved, and to whom it was ever due; who was the *Firſt-born* of every Creature; and concerning whom the Almighty had declared long before, *I will make him my Firſt born, higher than the Kings of the Earth.*

Here it is fixed, and here it muſt reſt, till *all Things are accompliſhed*; for he muſt reign till he hath put all *Enemies under his Feet*, till Death itſelf is ſwallowed up in Victory.

It is much to be obſerved, that the Prophecies, relating to the Covenant of better Hopes, were given to the People of God; when Religion itſelf ſeemed to be in Diſtreſs, and to want all Helps to ſupport it in the World. When Idolatry and Evils of every kind prevailed, then for the ſake of the few Righteous, were the better Hopes revived, that the *Juſt might live by Faith*, and that *a Remnant might be ſaved.*

This was a Time in which true Faith wanted the Comfort of future Hopes; the preſent Scene was dark and gloomy; the Loving-kindneſs of the Lord was hid from his People, and they ſaw nothing but Tokens of Anger and Diſpleaſure on every Side. In this Time therefore, God thought fit to give more and plainer Indications of his Purpoſe, to eſtabliſh the Kingdom of Righteouſneſs, than had ever been given before, from the Day of *Adam.*

Now was it that the *Seed in whom all nations were to be bleſſed* was manifeſtly deſcribed; that the Time and Place of his Birth were appointed; that his great Works, his Glories and his Sufferings were foretold.

Now it was that God taught his People plainly to expect a new Covenant, a better than that made with their Fathers. In a Word, now it was, that all Eyes were opened to look for his Coming, who was to be the *Glory of Iſrael*, the *Deſire of all Nations*, a *Light to lighten the Gentiles.*

This great Scene being opened, and placed in ſo clear a View, the Work of Prophecy was finiſhed; and in a few Years, the Gift itſelf ceaſed. A plain and demonſtrative Evidence, that the *Spirit of Prophecy* is the *Teſtimony of Jeſus*; and that all the Bleſſings and Promiſes, given

to God's antient People, were to have their final Accompliſhment in the Manifeſtation of the *bleſſed Seed*.

That the Prophecy given at the Time of the Fall, was underſtood in the antient Jewiſh Church, to relate to the Times of the Meſſiah, may with great Probability be inferred from many Paſſages, but eſpecially from one in *Iſaiah*, where, after a full Deſcription of the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the Happineſs of thoſe who were the *Seed of the bleſſed of the Lord*, the State and Condition of the wicked, in the Time of that Kingdom, is thus deſcribed in few Words. *And Duſt ſhall be the Serpent's Meat*, Iſa. lxv. 25.

By what Figure of Speech, or for what Reaſon is the Serpent here made to ſignify, thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed from the *Seed of the bleſſed*? Why is the Puniſhment of theſe Reprobates ſet forth by the Serpent's eating Duſt? There is nothing in the Prophet to explain this Figure; but he ſeems to uſe it as a Mode of Expreſſion, well known and perfectly underſtood by his Countrymen; and from whence could they borrow it, but from the Hiſtory of Man's Fall? There you may find the *Seed of the bleſſed*, to whom Victory over the Serpent is promiſed; and there you may ſee the Serpent doomed to eat Duſt; and the Alluſion to this antient Prophecy in *Iſaiah*'s Deſcription of the Kingdom of the Meſſiah, ſhews, in what Senſe it was underſtood of Old, and for many Ages before the Birth of Chriſt.

Theſe Prophecies relating to the *Meſſiah*, have ſtill a large and more extenſive Uſe, not confined to any particular Age, but reaching to every Age of the Chriſtian Church. They were given to the *Jews of Old* for the Support of their Faith, and are a ſtanding Reproof to their Children of this Age for their Unbelief. They taught thoſe of the old Time to expect the Kingdom of Chriſt, and are a Condemnation to thoſe of this Time for rejecting it. They were a Support and an Evidence to the Goſpel, and furniſhed every true Believer with an Anſwer to *give to him, who aſketh the Reaſon of the Hope that is in him*.

The Prophecy of *Moſes* recorded in the 17th of *Deuteronomy*, deſerves our particular Attention: it runs thus; *The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet, from the midſt of thee, of thy Brethren like unto me, unto him ye ſhall hearken*, Ver. 15. The ſame is repeated ver. 18 with this Addition: *And it ſhall come to paſs* (they are the Words of God) *that whoſoever will not hearken unto my Words, which he* (that Prophet) *ſhall ſpeak in my Name, I will require it of him*.

Here now is a plain Declaration on God's Part, at the very Time the Law was eſtabliſhed, of another Prophet, like unto *Moſes* to be raiſed in Time, as a new Law-giver to whom all were to yield Obedience.

I know full well, that great Authorities are produced for interpreting theſe Words of a Succeſſion of Prophets in the *Jewiſh* Church: but notwithſtanding theſe Authorities, the

the Appeal lies to the Law and to the Teſtimony, and thither muſt we go.

In the firſt Place then, the Text ſpeaks of one Prophet only in the ſingular Number, and not of many. In this Caſe therefore the Letter of the Text agrees with our Senſe; an Argument which ought to have great Weight with thoſe, who make ſuch heavy Complaints, when in demonſtrating the Authenticity of Scripture, we go beyond the literal Senſe of the Old Teſtament.

2d. To expound this Paſſage, of a Succeſſion of Prophets, and to ſay that all were to be like *Moſes*, contradicts God's own Declaration concerning the Manner, in which he intended to deal with other Prophets: As to all other Prophets, God declares he would ſpeak to them *in Viſions*, and in *Dreams*, but with *Moſes*, he would converſe *Mouth to Mouth*, or as it is elſewhere expreſſed *Face to Face*. Herein then conſiſted one chief Dignity and Eminence of *Moſes*, and in this Reſpect the Prophets of *Iſrael* were not to be like him.

3d. The Likeneſs to *Moſes*, ſpoken of in the Paſſage under Conſideration, has a ſpecial Regard to this ſingular Privilege of ſeeing God Face to Face, as is evident partly from the Text itſelf, and partly from the Cloſe of the Book of *Deuteronomy* compared with the Text: In the Text itſelf a Promiſe is given of a Prophet like *Moſes*, which likeneſs in the 18th Verſe is expounded by God's ſaying, *I will put my Words in his Mouth*, which imports ſomething more than ſpeaking to him in *Viſions* and in *Dreams*.

4th. If we enquire from Hiſtorical Evidence, after the Completion of this Prophecy, we ſhall find, that it did moſt punctually agree with the Character of our Saviour, and with no other Prophet, either before or after him. All the Prophets of the Old Teſtament ſaw Viſions and dreamed Dreams, all the Prophets in the New were in the ſame State. St. *Peter* had a Viſion; St. *John* ſaw Viſions; St. *Paul* had Viſions and Dreams: but Chriſt himſelf neither ſaw a Viſion, nor dreamed a Dream, but had intimate and immediate Communication with God the Father; he was in *the Father's Boſom*, he and no Man elſe *had ſeen the Father*, and had *the Fullneſs of the Godhead in him*. Now let it be ſeriouſly obſerved: that *Moſes* and *Chriſt* are the *only two* in all the ſacred Hiſtory, who had this Communication with God: the likeneſs to *Moſes* is ſaid directly to lie in this, of ſeeing God *Face to Face*. Can the Promiſe then of raiſing a Prophet like unto *Moſes* be poſſibly applied to any other Perſon than Jeſus Chriſt? The other Part of the Parallel needs not to be inſiſted on; that Chriſt was a Lawgiver will eaſily be admitted on all Hands; but the Execution of this Threat, annexed to this Prophecy is too remarkable to be paſſed over in Silence; it has been literally fulfilled upon the whole Nation; every Man who conſiders the State of the *Jews*, from the Rejection of Chriſt to this Day, muſt own, that this Part of the Prophecy at leaſt, has been punctually verified.

Thoſe who are educated in the Beliefs

Belief of Chriſtianity, and taught to receive the Books of both Teſtaments with equal Reverence, are not apt to diſtinguiſh between the Evidence for their Faith ariſing from the one and the other: but if we look back to the earlieſt times of preaching the Goſpel, and conſider how the Caſe ſtood as to the *Jewiſh* Converts on one Side, who were convinced of the divine Authority of the Old Teſtament; and as to the *Gentile* Converts on the other who had no ſuch Perſuaſions, the Diſtinction will appear very manifeſtly.

The ancient Prophecies, though they are Evidence both to the *Jew* and the *Gentile*, yet they are not ſo to both in the ſame Way of Reaſoning and Deduction, nor to the ſame End and Purpoſe; for, obſerve, the Jews were poſſeſſed of the Oracles of God, and firmly perſuaded of the Truth of them; the very firſt Thing therefore which he had to do upon the Appearance of the Meſſiah, was to examine his Title, by the Character given of him in the Prophets; he could not conſiſtently with his Belief in God, and Faith in the antient Prophecies, attend to other Arguments, till fully ſatisfied and convinced in this. All the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, relating to the Offices and Characters of the Meſſiah, were immoveable Bars to all Pretenſions, till fulfilled and accompliſhed in the long expected Redeemer.

For this Reaſon the Preachers of the Goſpel, in applying to the Jews, begin with the Argument from Prophecy. Thus St. *Paul*, in his Diſcourſe with the Jews at *Antioch*, begins with the Call of *Abraham*; and after a ſhort hiſtorical Deduction of Matters from thence, to the Time of *David*, he adds, *Of this Man's Seed hath God, according to his Promiſes, raiſed unto Iſrael, a Saviour, Jeſus*, Acts xiii. 23.

Here the whole Argument evidently reſts upon the Authority of Prophecy, and all the Parts of the Apoſtolical Sermon are anſwerable to that Beginning, proceeding from one End to the other upon the Authority of the old Prophets.

But the very ſame Apoſtle St. *Paul* preaching to the People of *Athens*, *Acts* xvii. argues from other Topics; he ſays nothing of the Prophets, to whoſe Miſſion and Authority the *Athenians* were perfect Strangers; but begins with declaring to them, *God that made the World, and all Things therein*; he goes on condemning all idolatrous Practices; and aſſuring them, that *God is not worſhipped with Mens Hands, as though he needed any Thing*.

He accounts to them, for the paſt Times of Ignorance, at which God winked, and tells them, that *now* he calls Men to Repentance, having appointed *Chriſt Jeſus to be the Judge of all Men*, for the Truth of which he appeals to the Evidence of Chriſt's Reſurrection. —— *Where* ſay the Apoſtle, *he hath given Aſſurance unto all Men, in that he raiſed him from the Dead*, Acts xvii. 31.

Wherefore is St *Paul's* Argument upon one and the ſame Subject in *Acts* xiii. and xvii. ſo apparently different from each other? Can this be ac-

accounted for any other Way, than by conſidering the different Circumſtances of the Perſons to whom he delivered himſelf? In *Acts* xiii. he argues profeſſedly with Jews, to whom were committed the Oracles of God, and who, from theſe Oracles, were well inſtructed in the great Marks and Characters of the expected Meſſiah. It had been highly abſurd therefore to reaſon with them upon other Arguments, till he had firſt convinced them by their Prophets.

To them therefore he urges and applies the Authority of Prophecy only; but to the *Athenians*, who knew not the Prophets, or if they knew them, had no Reverence or eſteem for them, it would have been abſurd to offer Proofs from Prophecies.

It is very obſervable, that St. *Paul* in his Sermon at *Athens* goes no further, then calling them to Repentance, and to Faith in Chriſt, as the Perſon appointed by God to judge the World.

Now in this Doctrine he carried natural Religion with him in every Point, except the Appointment of Chriſt to be Judge, for which he appeals to the Evidence given by God in raiſing Jeſus from the Dead.

But to the Jews he ſpeaks of a Saviour, of Remiſſion of Sins, of the Juſtification of Believers from all Things, from which the Law of *Moſes* could not juſtify.

The Difference therefore can only ariſe from this Conſideration, that the Jews were from their Scriptures well acquainted with the loſt Condition of Man, and knew that a Redemption from Sin, and the Power of it, was to be expected?

But the Gentiles had loſt this Knowledge, and were firſt to be taught the Condition of the World, and the various Adminiſtrations of Providence, with regard to Mankind, before they could have any juſt Notion of the Redemption of the World.

With Reſpect to the Gentiles then, the Caſe ſtood thus. They were called from Idols to the Acknowledgement of the true God; from Iniquity, to the Practice of Holineſs; by ſetting before them Chriſt Jeſus, the Preacher of Righteouſneſs, and the appointed Judge of the World, under the Confirmation of many Signs and Wonders wrought by God for this Purpoſe.

Being ſo far eſtabliſhed, they were led back to view this wonderful Scene of Providence, and the State of the World; andcame to ſee that Chriſt was not only the Judge, but the Redeemer of Mankind. To the Jews Prophecy was the firſt Proof; to the Gentile it was the laſt. The Jew believed in Chriſt, becauſe foretold by the Prophets. The Gentile believed the Prophets, becauſe they had ſo exactly foretold *Chriſt Jeſus*. Both became ſtedfaſt Believers, having each in his Way, a full View of all the Diſpenſations of Providence toward Mankind.

If this Account be genuine and authentic, it will enable us to clear the Argument from Prophecy of the many Miſrepreſentations, under which the Enemies of Revelation have induſtriouſly

duſtriouſly clouded it. It will ſhew us, there is no Neceſſity for a Gentile to become a Jew, in order to his becoming a Chriſtian, upon the Authority of the antient Prophets. It will ſhew us, that the Proof from Prophecy is not an Argument of the ſame Kind in both Caſes, though in both Caſes, proceeding upon real and ſolid Principles of Reaſon.

But we proceed to obſerve another Uſe of Prophecy, with Regard to the Jews, for which the Gentiles would ſeem not to have had the ſame Occaſion.

The Jews we know lived under a divine Law, eſtabliſhed in Signs, and Wonders, and mighty Works, founded on very great Promiſes on one Side, on Threatenings and mighty Terror on the other, as far as the Bleſſings and Terrors of this World can extend. They were warned over and over, not to forſake their Law, or to ſuffer any ſtrange Cuſtoms and Ceremonies to grow up among them.

Theſe Cautions, intended to preſerve them from the Corruptions of the Heathen Nations around them, might eaſily, as in the Event they have done, grow into Prejudices againſt any future Revelation, though made upon the Authority of God himſelf.

To guard againſt ſuch Prejudices, and to render them without Excuſe, it was but reaſonable to give them early and frequent Notice of the Change intended, that they might not, under the Colour of adhering ſtedfaſtly and faithfully to God's firſt Covenant, reject his ſecond, when the Time of Publication came.

There are of this Sort many Prophecies in the Old Teſtament; of this kind are the many Declarations on God's Part, that he had no Pleaſure in Sacrifices and Oblations, in New Moons, and in Sabbaths; ſtrange Declarations, conſidering that all theſe were his own Appointment! But not in the leaſt ſtrange, conſidering the many and frequent Prophecies of a new and a better Covenant to be eſtabliſhed with his People.

The Prophet *Iſaiah*, as before obſerved, is frequently ſtiled the Evangelical Prophet, becauſe of the many and expreſs Prophecies, to be found in him, relating to Chriſt and his Church.

Now this Prophet, in the very Entrance on his Work, ſhews the little Value of meer legal Inſtitutions. *To what Purpoſe*, ſays he, ſpeaking in God's Name, *is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me?* —— *I am full of the Burnt-Offerings of Rams, and the Fat of fed Beaſts; and I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He-Goats.* —— *Your New Moons and your appointed Feaſts, my Soul hateth; they are a Trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them*, Iſaiah xi. 14.

The bringing in of Prophecy was not the only Change in the State of Religion, occaſioned by the Fall. Sacrifice came in at the ſame Time, as appears by the Courſe of the Hiſtory; and it is hardly poſſible it ſhould come in, eſpecially at the Time it did

did, any otherwiſe than upon the Authority of divine Inſtitution. It is the firſt Act of Religion mentioned in ſacred Hiſtory to be accepted by God; which implies ſtrongly, that it was of his own Appointment; for we can hardly ſuppoſe that ſuch a Mark of Diſtinction would have been ſet upon a meer human Invention.

In later Times, when the Account of Things grew clearer, Sacrifice appears to be appointed by God as an *Expiation* for *Sin*; and we have no Reaſon to imagine that it was turned aſide from its original Uſe.

There is indeed no expreſs Declaration of the Uſe of Sacrifice in Religion, at its firſt Appearance, and yet ſomething appears in the Account that may afford Light in this Matter. We read that *Cain* brought an *Offering of the Fruit of the Ground*; and *Abel of the Firſtlings of his Flock, and the Fat thereof. The Lord had Reſpect unto* Abel, *and to his Offering*; *but unto* Cain *and to his Offering, he had not Reſpect.*

Allowing the Maxim of the Jewiſh Church to have been good from the firſt Inſtitution of Sacrifice, *That without ſhedding of Blood there is no Remiſſion*, the Caſe may poſſibly be this. *Abel* came a Petitioner for Grace and Pardon, and brought the Atonement appointed for Sin. *Cain* appears before God, as a *juſt Perſon, wanting no Repentance*; he brings an Offering in Acknowledgment of God's Goodneſs and Bounty; but no Atonement in Acknowledment of his own Wretchedneſs.

The Expoſtulation of God with *Cain*, favours this Account *If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? If thou doſt not well, Sin lieth at thy Door.* That is, If thou art Righteous, thy Righteouſneſs ſhall ſave thee; if thou art not, by what Expiation is thy Sin purged? It lieth ſtill at thy Door.

To this may be added, that the Apoſtle to the Hebrews aſſirms, *Heb.* xi. 4. that *Abel*'s Sacrifice was rendered excellent by Faith. What could this Faith be, but a Reliance on the Promiſes and Appointments of God? Which Faith *Cain* wanted, relying on his Well-doing.

If this Interpretation is admitted, it plainly ſhews, that the true Religion inſtituted by God has been *one* and the *ſame* from the Fall of *Adam*, ſubſiſting even upon the ſame Principle of Faith. At firſt upon only *general*, and obſcure Hopes, which were gradually opened and unfolded in every Age, till the better Days came, when God thought Good to call us into *the miraculous* Light of his Goſpel.

It is neceſſary to conſider this Piece of Hiſtory, becauſe it ſhews that Sacrifice was one Kind of Prophecy, or Repreſentation of the one great Sacrifice once offered for the Sons of Sins the World.

In the Infancy of the Church they wanted Direction, and without Doubt, were directed in every thing relating to Religion, ſo far as was agreeable to that Diſpenſation. Doubtleſs *Adam* was inſtructed by God to Sacrifice, nor is it improbable, that thoſe Beaſts

Beaſts, with the Skins of which *Adam* and *Eve* were cloathed, *Gen.* iii. 21, were ſlain as Sacrifices.

God certainly inſtructed our firſt Parents in the Faith and Worſhip; which the Alteration in their Circumſtances required.

Having made a moſt gracious Covenant with them, it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he alſo ſignified to them, that they ſhould for a perpetual Ratification and Aſſurance of it to their Faith, offer to him Sacrifices; for by the Blood of Sacrifices, Covenants were ratified in after Time.

The eating of the Tree of Life, was a covenanting Action (aſſuring Immortality to their continued Obedience) ſuitable to a State of Innocence. But the ſlaying of living Creatures (expreſſing the deadly Nature of Sin, at the ſame Time that it aſſured them of eternal Life) was more ſuitable to a State of Guilt.

Our bleſſed Saviour is repreſented as ſtanding in a three-fold Relation to his Church and People; as Prophet, Prieſt, and King; we ſhall therefore conclude this Part of our Subject, with inſtancing the Congruity of the ſacred Writings in this Reſpect, both before and after the Fulfillment of theſe moſt important Events.

Firſt, as a Prophet. We have conſidered at large the Nature of Prophecy, and ſhewn that the Prophets of God were the Inſtruments for conveying the divine Mind and Will, relative to Mankind, reſpecting Futurity. We have endeavoured to prove the Manner in which their Predictions have been fulfilled under the Goſpel Diſpenſation; from whence it muſt appear, that the Meſſiah's Kingdom was the ultimate End to which they referred.

Now then we may conſider the bleſſed Jeſus, as the *Prophet* emphatically ſo ſtiled, becauſe by his Miniſtry and Doctrine he hath thrown a Light upon thoſe parts of the antient Predictions, which appeared dark and obſcure. Thus he is ſtiled, *a light to lighten the Gentiles*, Luke ii. 32. *The true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, John i. 9.

Amongſt the many Titles by which our Lord is ſpoken of, he is called, a *Prophet, whom* the People *muſt hear in all Things*, Deut. xviii. 15. And again, in the nineteenth Verſe, God ſays, *And it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever will not hearken* unto my Words, which he ſhall *ſpeak in my Name, I will require it of him.*

The Prophetic Office of the bleſſed Jeſus, is particularly mentioned, *Iſ.* xlii. *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold, mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him, &c.*

The Gift of Prophecy was eſteemed by the pious Jews under their Diſpenſation, in the ſame Senſe as the Unction, or Gifts of the Spirit, are eſteemed under the Chriſtian, and this Conſideration will greatly tend to elucidate the Congruity of the ſacred Writings, relative to this peculiar Office of the Son of God; for as we read in *Iſa.* lxi. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath*

hath anointed me to preach good Tidings unto the Meek, &c.

So likewiſe the Apoſtle to the Hebrews informs us, that *God hath in theſe laſt Days ſpoken unto us by his Son.* And again, to ſhew Preference of the latter, to the former Diſpenſation, he writes, *For if the Word ſpoken to us by Angels* (which would be more properly tranſlated Meſſengers) *was ſtedfaſt, how ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great Salvation*, Heb. ii. 2, 3.

In ſhort, from theſe and many other Paſſages of Holy Writ, it appears, that the bleſſed Jeſus, ſtands in a peculiar Relation to his Church and People as a *Prophet*.

Secondly. Chriſt ſtands in a peculiar Manner in the Relation of a *Prieſt* to his Church and People.

The Prieſts, under the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation, were Perſons ſet a part to miniſter in holy Things, and to offer Sacrifices for the Sins of the People.

We have already obſerved concerning the Jewiſh Ritual and Ceremonial Law, that the Rites and Ceremonies of their religious Inſtitution were hieroglyphic, and intended by external Repreſentations, to convey uſeful Inſtructions and ſpiritual Knowledge.

Now a brief Review of ſome of their particular Cuſtoms, and their Alluſion to the Offices of the Meſſiah, will elucidate the Manner in which Chriſt becomes emphatically, the *the Prieſt* of his *Church and People*. To become a Prieſt under the Law, it was neceſſary that there ſhould be an immediate Call from God, *Numb.* xviii. 7, *Chriſt* under the Goſpel is peculiarly ordained to the prieſtly Office, *Heb.* v. 10. *Called of God an High Prieſt.*

The Covenant under the Law was ratified by Blood, *Exod.* xxx. 10. The Covenant under the glorious Diſpenſation of the Goſpel was ratified not by the Blood of Beaſts; but by the Blood of Chriſt, *who through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without Spot to God.*

All the Ceremonies and Ordinances under the Law were merely alluſive and typical, or according to Scripture Language, *a Shadow of good Things to come*; but the Offices of Chriſt, and Ordinances of the Goſpel are real and effectual. The former could only ſhew the Neceſſity of the great Work which the Redeemer effected. The ſacerdotal Function under the Law was temporary; Chriſt is an high Prieſt for ever; the Sacrifices under the Law are repreſented as purifying the Fleſh, but the Blood of Chriſt is repreſented as *purifying the Conſcience from dead Works*, &c. In ſhort the bleſſed Jeſus hath by his Death on the Croſs and Interceſſion at the right Hand of God for his People, fully completed the great Office of Prieſthood long deſcribed under a faint Shadow, and fully accompliſhed all that was predicted of him.

But 3dly, Chriſt is repreſented in the Old and New Teſtament in the Character of a *King*. The Office of a King in a natural Senſe is to reign and govern, protect and defend:

Agreeable to this Idea, when the Prophet *Iſaiah* foretells the Birth and Kingdom of Chriſt, he ſpeaks thus, *Of the Increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no End, &c.* Iſai. ix. 7. to the ſame Purport the Evangeliſt records, *Luke* i. 36. *And he ſhall reign over the Houſe of* Jacob *for ever.*

With Reſpect to the Defence and Protection which Subjects in a natural Senſe expect from their King or Prince; Chriſt in a ſpiritual Senſe may be particularly deemed the King or Defender of his People, *Iſai.* lxiii. 3. *I will tread them* [that is his Enemies and thoſe of his People] in mine Anger, &c. There is an evident Alluſion between thoſe Texts, *Iſai.* xi. 10. and *Rom.* xv. 12. which particularly ſet forth the kingly Office of the bleſſed Jeſus as it refers to the Gentiles, as alſo between *Pſal.* cx. 1. and 1 *Cor.* xv. 25, 26. From hence it will plainly appear to the ſerious Chriſtian, that his Saviour eminently ſuſtains the elevated Character of King or Prince to his People, as he reigns over them by the Greatneſs of his Power, governs them by his Laws and his Spirit, defends them from their Enemies, and will protect them from the Wrath of God, and all the Aſſaults of their potent and inveterate Enemy, who goes about ſeeking whom he may devour.

Upon the Whole therefore, with Reſpect to Prophecy in general, it is evident, that the *Seed of the Woman*, who ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head; the Seed promiſed to *Abraham*, in whom all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed, the Son promiſed to *David*, to ſit on his Throne for ever; and the King, who ſhould rule out of *Sion*, foretold by the Prophets is *one* and the *ſame* Perſon: That the Purpoſe of God, in giving the *Word of Prophecy* was the ſame in every Age; that Chriſt has, under different Degrees of Light, been ſet forth from the Beginning as the Hope of the World; that he it was, whoſe *Day* the faithful in every Age, deſired to ſee.

CHAP. VII.

On the Connection of the Old and New Teſtament, or general Agreement of the ſacred Writers.

THE ſacred Volume which we call the BIBLE, is not a Book compiled by a ſingle Author, nor by many Hands acting in Confederacy in the ſame Age, in which Caſe there would be no Difficulty in compoſing a conſiſtent Scheme, nor would it be any Wonder to find the ſeveral Parts in a juſt and cloſe Connection; but the Scriptures were done by ſeveral Hands, in very different Conditions of Life, from the Throne down to the very loweſt Degree, and in very diſtant Ages, through the long Space of one Thouſand five Hundred Years, when the World muſt have put on a new Face, and Men muſt have had different Intereſts to purſue, which naturally would have led a Spirit of Impoſture to have valued its Schemes, and to have adapted them

to

to different Stations in the World, and to the different Turns and Changes in every Age.

David wrote about 400 Years after *Moſes*, and *Iſaiah* about 250 after *David*, and *Matthew* more than 700 after *Iſaiah*; and yet theſe Authors, with all the other Prophets and Apoſtles, write in perfect Harmony, confirming the Authority of their Predeceſſors, labouring to reduce the People to the Obſervance of their Inſtructions, and loudly exclaiming againſt the Neglect and Contempt of them, and denouncing the ſevereſt Judgments upon ſuch as continued diſobedient.

This was the principal Work of the Prophets in a long Succeſſion: And it is well known our Lord came not to deſtroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill, that is, to vindicate and illuſtrate their Meaning, to complete what was imperfect, and to anſwer the higheſt Ends of what was typical and figurative.

Now this is a very ſtrong Proof, that the Scriptures were dictated throughout by one and the ſame Spirit, which could be no other than the Spirit of God, and of Truth. It is allowed, as in the Caſe of *Mahometiſm*, that an Impoſture, or religious Fraud, may be handed down from one Age to another, but not by ſeveral different Perſons, all making equal Pretenſions to a divine Authority and Commiſſion; for, in this Caſe they are to be conſidered, not as a Succeſſion of Teachers, deriving their Doctrine from one common original, but as a ſingle and diſtinct Impoſtor, and conſequently every one in a diſtant Age, and in quite a different State of Things, would ſet up for himſelf, and ſeek a ſingular Glory by building upon a diſtant and ſeparate Foundation from others.

It would ſignify little to an Impoſtor, who has no other Intention than to promote his own Honour and Renown, to pretend a Commiſſion from Heaven, only to give Reputation to another Deceiver, by confirming what he has already eſtabliſhed.

Therefore as the Writers of the Holy Scriptures, though they all claim a divine Authority, yet write in perfect Connection and Harmony, mutually confirming the Doctrine and Teſtimony of each other, and concurring to eſtabliſh the very ſame religious Truths and Principles, it is a ſtrong Proof that all derive their Inſtructions from the ſame Fountain, the Wiſdom of God, and were indeed under the Direction and Illumination of his Spirit.

We may take another Argument from ourſelves, as we make Profeſſion of Faith in *Jeſus Chriſt*; for our Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, who dwell in the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth, is a Proof that the Goſpel ſpread itſelf over all the *Roman* Empire; for, from *Jeruſalem*, it came to us by gradual Progreſs, and advancing from one Country to another, arrived at Length in theſe Iſlands.

No Perſon can doubt or deny, that the Chriſtian Faith is, and for many Ages paſt has been, embraced in all thoſe numerous and diſtant Lands, which once compoſed the *Roman* Empire

Empire, and even in Countries far beyond the utmoſt Bounds thereof. In all theſe ſpacious Tracts, the Chriſtian Faith, in one Form or other, has been profeſſed; and Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, in one Form or other, have been adminiſtred, in a Succeſſion of Ages, quite up to the Times of the Apoſtles, and of our bleſſed Lord.

It is moſt certain that Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, thoſe Summaries of the whole Goſpel, were not intitled in any following Age, by any one Party of Chriſtians, but have been handed down to us, and to all Parties amongſt Chriſtians, from the Mouth and Inſtitution of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

No Fact can be more evident than this; from our Lord therefore and his Apoſtles, the Goſpel ſpread over the greateſt Part of the known World, which before its Publication was univerſally involved in Idolatry, eſtabliſhed by long Cuſtom, and human Laws, ſtrongly defended by all the Power and Learning of the World, by all the Zeal of the wiſeſt Superſtition, by all the Blindneſs of profound Ignorance, and by all the incorrigible Perverſeneſs of corrupt and diſſolute Manners; a Complication of Cauſes which would for ever bid Defiance to any Philoſophy or Wiſdom of the few that can be ſuppoſed to obtain a better Senſe in the midſt of univerſal Darkneſs and Depravity. But the Goſpel gained a moſt complete and extenſive Victory over all theſe, demoliſhed the Idol of the Heathen World, and every where erected the Trophies of a conquering *Jeſus*.

Now this ſurprizing Change, which is notorious to all Mankind, muſt be effected either by human Power and Policy, or by a divine and ſupernatural Influence.

By human Power and Policy, great Revolutions have been brought about in all Ages and Parts of the World; and therefore we do not wonder of the ſpread of the Mahometan or Turkiſh Religion, as it was propagated by the Sword, under a mighty Warrior and Politician, who by Ravage, Bloodſhed and Deſolation, conquered many Nations and Kingdoms, laid the Foundation of a potent and ſpacious Empire; and thus by Violence opened a Way for the Reception and extenſive Profeſſion of his newly deviſed Religion. But the Religion of Jeſus was triumphant, not only without the Aid of human Power or Policy, but even in direct Oppoſition to it. The plain Fact is this,

A poor Perſon, about thirty Years of Age, called *Jeſus*, a Carpenter's Son, of no Education or Learning, without Houſe or Habitation, without the leaſt human Intereſt or Influence, begins to preach Repentance among the Jews, the moſt ſuſpicious and bigotted People in the World; declares himſelf the Son of God gathers a few Diſciples, Perſons in the ſame low and naked Condition with himſelf, Fiſhermen, Publicans, and ſuch like, and ſends them about preaching, what he called the *Goſpel*, and Kingdom of God.

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He was deſpiſed by the Generality, and greatly oppoſed and harraſſed by Men of Power and Learning. However, he preached three or four Years; they caught him, and crucified him as an infamous Malefactor.

This direful Event, which would have totally ruined an Impoſtor, he plainly foreſaw and foretold; but not the leaſt diſcouraged by the Proſpect, he commanded his Diſciples to go and preach his Goſpel over all the World; promiſing that after his Death, he would aſſiſt them with Power from Heaven, in Virtue of which they ſhould certainly ſucceed.

They believed him; they ſet out; they preached up their crucified Maſter, as the Lord and Saviour of all Mankind; and which is very ſtrange, under the Conduct and Influence of a Maſter, who was dead to the World, and gone to another State! They prevailed; and in ſpite of the Fury of the Multitude, the moſt inveterate Prejudices of the whole World, the Zeal of Superſtition, the Hatred of the Jews, the Contempt of the Greeks, the Power of the Romans, the Pride of Philoſophers, and the Policy of Stateſmen: their Doctrine, like the Sun, almoſt at once, enlightened the World, overthrew the whole Syſtem of Pagan Idolatry and Religion, and advanced as far as our own Country, into the darkeſt and remoteſt Corners of the Earth.

Of this, we in this Chriſtian Age, are living Monuments and Proofs; many of us, it is to be hoped, have received the Goſpel; we own it a glorious and ſhining Light; we have renounced the Idolatry and vain Converſation of our Fathers; we confeſs and own the crucified Jeſus, our King and Head, and hope for eternal Life and Salvation through him.

Now there is no poſſible Way of accounting for this, but by allowing that *Jeſus* really was the *Son of God*, that he really roſe again from the Dead, and aſcended up into Heaven, and that he actually, from thence, ſent his Diſciples the Aids and Powers, which he had promiſed, and which were ſo far above all that is human, that they carried their own Evidence along with them, and rendered their Doctrine ſo ſurprizingly ſucceſsful.

As Jeſus did not ſend his Diſciples to preach to all the World till after his Death; and as he then, after his Death, did actually furniſh them with all miraculous Powers to render their Doctrine effectual: this is the moſt convincing Proof that the Doctrine was divine, and that he himſelf was actually gone to Heaven, and lived there as a glorious and divine Perſon; for that an Impoſtor, a Deceiver, hateful to the God of Truth, ſhould, after his Death, be able to animate, inſtruct, authorize, and impower a Company of Men, otherwiſe deſtitute of all Aſſiſtance, and labouring under all poſſible Difficulties, to throw down all the Religion of the World, and to erect a new one in their Stead, is utterly impoſſible.

It is therefore certain, beyond all

Doubt, that Jeſus Chriſt was ſent from Heaven to reveal the Goſpel to the World. As we are from hence very certain, that we have in our Hands the Writings of the Apoſtles, we may be ſure, that they contain a Revelation from Heaven, or that Doctrine, which Chriſt received from God his Father, and delivered to his Diſciples. If ſo, then the Writings of the Old Teſtament are alſo the Word of God, becauſe Chriſt and his Apoſtles declare them to be ſuch; therefore all Scripture is given by Inſpiration.

The ſame Thing may be proved by the long Train of miraculous Operations, which could be effected only by divine Power, and which were wrought in Confirmation of the Miſſion of Prophets and Apoſtles: as alſo from the Spirit of Prophecy, predicting future Events at great Diſtance of Time, which no human Segacity could poſſibly foreſee, and yet were actually fulfilled in correſpondence to the Prediction.

But as a minute Detail of Particulars would perhaps be ſomewhat tedious, we ſhall ſingle out one Inſtance of the divine, miraculous Power, and the Truth of the Prophetic Spirit; which Inſtance has been in all Ages a ſtanding Proof of Revelation, and which ſtill exiſts, and is before the Eyes of the preſent Generation, in almoſt all Countries of the World: this is the preſent State and Being of the Jews: for this People, as they were originally choſen to be the Repoſitory or Store-houſe of divine Knowledge, by the Revelation which was given to them, ſo they were alſo intended to be viſible Proofs of the Truth of it in all Ages and Parts of the World.

Our Lord, contrary to all human Probability, while he was on Earth, foretold the Deſtruction of the Jewiſh Temple and Polity, and their Diſperſion among all Nations, which was actually accompliſhed in about forty Years after.

In this diſperſed State they have now continued about ſeventeen hundred Years in great Numbers, and in great Ignominy and Contempt, and yet quite diſtinct and ſeparate from all the People among whom they lived.

This appears to us a ſtanding Miracle. Nor can we attribute it to any other Cauſe, but the Will and extraordinary Interpoſition of Heaven; when it is conſidered, that of all the famous Nations of the World, who might have been diſtinguiſhed from others, with great Advantage, and the moſt illuſtrious Marks of Honour and Renown, as the antient Egyptians, Aſſyrians, Perſians, Macedonians, Romans, who all in their Turns held the Empire of the World, and were, with great Ambition, the Lord's of Mankind. Yet *theſe*, even in their own Countries, are diſſolved into the Bulk of Mankind; nor is there a Perſon upon Earth can boaſt he is deſcended from theſe renowned imperial Anceſtors.

Whereas a ſmall Nation, generally deſpiſed and hated; and which, though now upon pretty good Terms with us, both Pagans and pretended

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Chriſtians, have for many Ages treated with the utmoſt Inſult, Indignity, Outrage, and Cruelty; and therefore one would imagine every Soul that belonged to it ſhould have gladly diſowned, and have been willing to have loſt the odious Name, by mixing with any other Nation; yet this hated People, harraſſed and butchered, more or leſs, by all Mankind, baniſhed from one Country to another, have under all Temptations to the contrary, and againſt the ordinary Courſe of Things, continued in a Body diſtinct and ſeparate from all Mankind, even in a State of Diſperſion for above ſeventeen hundred Years.

This is a Demonſtration, that the Wiſdom which formed them into a peculiar People, that they have almoſt ever ſince the Deluge, for about three thouſand ſix hundred Years, remained in a diſtinct and ſeparate State, and are ſtill liable to do ſo, is not Human but Divine; for no human Wiſdom or Power could form, or however execute ſo vaſt, ſo extenſive a Deſign.

It muſt be the Wiſdom and Power of that God alone, who is the ſame in every Age, and who in every Age has exerciſed a peculiar Providence over his peculiar People, the Deſcendants of *Abraham*, his Servant.

Thus the preſent State and Being of the Jews is a very public and ſtanding Evidence of the Truth of Revelation, in two Reſpects,

Firſt, With regard to their long Diſperſion, or Captivity, as they call it, and the various Calamities they were to ſuffer therein.

This is foretold in ſeveral Places, particularly, *Deut.* xxviii. 63, 64, 65. *The Lord will rejoice over you to deſtroy you, and bring you to nought*, as to their ſingular Privileges and Enjoyments, *and ye ſhall be plucked off from the Land, whither ye go to poſſeſs it. And the Lord ſhall ſcatter ye among all People, from one End of the Earth, even unto the other —— and among theſe Nations thou ſhalt find no Eaſe, neither ſhall the Sole of thy Foot have Reſt; but the Lord ſhall give thee there a trembling Heart, and failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind.*

Again, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 19. *I ſcattered them among the Heathen, and they were diſperſed among the Countries.*

And our bleſſed Lord predicts, *Luke* xxi. 24. *And they*, the Jews, *ſhall fall by the Edge of the Sword, and ſhall be led away captive into all Nations*; *and* Jeruſalem *ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles.*

Secondly, The State and Being of the Jews, is a public and ſtanding Evidence of the Truth of Revelation, with reſpect to their being preſerved as a diſtinct and ſeparate Body.

This alſo was plainly predicted, *Deut.* xxvi. 44. *Yet for all that, when they be in the Hand of their Enemies, I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them, to deſtroy them utterly, and to break my Covenant with them.* Jer. xxx. 10, 11. *Fear not, O my Servant* Jacob, *neither be diſmay'd,*

O Iſrael; *for lo, I will ſave thee from afar, and thy Seed from the Land of their Captivity; for though I make a full End of all the Nations, whither I have ſcattered thee; yet will I not make a full End of thee.* Jere. xxx. 10. *Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye Nations, and declare it in the Iſles afar off; and ſay, he that ſcattered* Iſrael *will gather him, and keep him as a Shepherd doth his Flock.*

Thoſe, and many other Paſſages, too numerous to be quoted, plainly ſhew, that it was the Deſign of divine Providence to preſerve the Jewiſh Nation in their Diſperſion, and to preſerve them a diſtinct and ſeparate People, in order to their future Reſtoration.

We, and many other Nations at this Day, ſee theſe Predictions verified in the preſent State of the Jews, who have been ſo long, and ſtill are ſo miraculouſly preſerved, ſeparate from all other People.

Now this is a ſtanding Miracle, a wonderful Work of divine Providence, and as ſtrong a Proof of Revelation, as if we were to ſee the Dead, every Year, riſe out of their Graves, in Confirmation of it; for we have ſtill among us, after ſo long a Time, and ſo many various Revolutions in human Affairs, the peculiar People, whom God, above three thouſand Years ago, ſeparated unto himſelf; the very People who are the principal Subject of Revelation, and who are ſaid there to be the principal Objects of his Providence, and we ſee them at this Day to be ſo in a very ſurprizing Manner.

Therefore in their preſent State we may plainly read the antient Promiſe made to *Abraham*, the Head and Root of the Nation, the many wonderful Works wrought for them from firſt to laſt, and the Truth of prophetic Predictions; in the preſent State of the Jews, we may read the Truth of the Goſpel, for the Rejection of which, God rejected them, and ſcattered them over the Face of the Earth.

In ſhort, we are certain there was ſuch a People as the Jews, to whom God delivered the Revelation of his Will in antient Time, for this very People exiſt among us at this Day, and preſerve among them that very Revelation with a moſt ſacred and religious Care.

We are ſure the numerous Predictions of Scripture, both in the Old and New Teſtament, relating to their future State, are true; for we ſee them made good in the preſent State of the Jews; and therefore we may be aſſured that the holy Scriptures are given by Inſpiration of God; for only the Spirit of God could foretel ſuch Events, and the ſame Spirit which foretold theſe Events, ſpake in the Prophets and Apoſtles, and inſpired them with all that divine Wiſdom and Knowledge which we find in all their Writings.

We might add the long Apoſtacy and general Corruption of the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, ſo plainly foretold, and under ſuch expreſs and particular Characters, in the Apoſtolic Writings.

This all the World may ſee has been

been abundantly fulfilled in the Church of *Rome*.

Now, only the Spirit of God could foreſee that ſuch a diſtant and deplorable State of Things, which no human Probability could have conjectured, would have riſen out of the pure and heavenly Doctrine of Chriſt. But the Spirit which predicted this Event, is the very ſame which was poured out upon the Apoſtles, and enlightened their Minds with the Knowledge of the Goſpel; therefore the Apoſtles, who wrote the New Teſtament, had the Spirit of God, and were enlightened by it.

By theſe Arguments, we are pointing out the only Fountain of Life and Happineſs, a Mine more valuable than of Gold and precious Stones; a plentiful Magazine of heavenly and everlaſting Wealth, an inexhauſtible Fund of ſolid Comfort and Peace, the holy Scriptures, the Word of the everlaſting God; a Treaſure of more immenſe Value, which we have in our Poſſeſſion, if we are wiſe to make a right Improvement of it.

But the Connection and Harmony of the ſacred Writings will receive a farther Illuſtration, if we trace the divine Diſpenſations, called in the ſame, the *Ways* and *Works* of God.

The *Ways of God* frequently ſignify the Rules of Life, which he hath given us to obſerve, *Pſ.* cxix. 3. *They alſo do no Iniquity; they walk in his Ways:* that is, *in the Law of the Lord.*

The *Works of God* may ſignify, the meer Operations and Productions of his Power; but both theſe Words have a more reſtricted and emphatical Signification. A *Way* ſignifies alſo a Courſe of Action, a Cuſtom, Conſtitution or Inſtitution, which any Perſon or Number of Perſons form to themſelves. *Prov.* viii. 22. *The Lord poſſeſſed me* Wiſdom *in the Beginning of his Way, before his Works of old.* Prov. xii. 26. *The Way of the Wicked*, their Courſe of Action, *ſeduceth them.* Hoſ. x. 13. *Becauſe thou didſt truſt in thy Way*, the Schemes and Methods, political or religious, of thy own deviſing, *and in the Multitude of thy mighty Men.* Amos viii. 14. *The Manner*, that is, the Religious Conſtitution, *of* Beerſheba *liveth*, ſubſiſts, flouriſhes, notwithſtanding the Oppoſition made to it.

Hence *Ways* and *Works* ſignify the Appointments, Conſtitutions, or Diſpenſations of God, by which we are to underſtand, "The Schemes or "Methods deviſed or contrived by "the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God "to diſcover or ſhew himſelf, his "Nature and Will, his Beneficence "and Juſtice, to the Minds of his "reaſonable Creatures, for their In-"ſtruction, Diſcipline and Reforma-"tion, in order to promote their "Happineſs."

Theſe are the great Ends of the divine Diſpenſations, as ſet forth to us in the divine Word, which uniformly tends to promote the ſame, and theſe are the principal Points to be attended to in the Explication of them.

The great God, for ever to be adored, hath actually given Exiſtence

to a World of Human Beings, ſuch as we are. He therefore is our Father, and we are his Off-ſpring, whom he hath created in Love, that in a right Uſe of the Means he hath graciouſly afforded us, we might be qualified for Honour and Immortality in the heavenly World.

This ſeems to be the higheſt Deſign the divine Goodneſs can form, and the higheſt Excellency to which our Nature can attain.

This may be conſidered as the Baſis of all the divine Diſpenſations from the Beginning of the World; for unleſs heavenly Diſpoſitions are implanted in our Minds, we cannot be qualified for Honour and Enjoyment. It is therefore becoming the Father of our Spirits, and ſuitable to Beings of our Capacities and Circumſtances, that proper Means be provided for our Inſtruction and Diſcipline.

For Inſtance. As God is not the Object of any of our Senſes, and can be ſeen only by our Underſtandings, it is proper that he ſhould ſet before us, in the Frame and Furniture of the World, ſuch viſible and various Diſplays of his Being, Power, Wiſdom, Juſtice, and kind Regard, as may engage our Attention, diſcover his eternal Godhead, and lead us to the Acknowledgment, Adoration, Love, and dutiful Obedience to our Creator, Father, and Benefactor.

Theſe are the Works, the Diſpenſations, or Conſtitutions of Nature, whereby the Almighty, as in a Glaſs, has diſcovered himſelf to the Thoughts and Eyes of his Creatures here below.

But beſides the Conſtitution of univerſal Nature, there are a Variety of Diſpenſations, which are more immediately relative to Mankind; as the being born of Parents to ſupply the ſeveral Generations of the World, whence reſult ſundry Relations and Duties; the being ſuſtained by Food; covered and ſheltered by Clothes and Habitations; healed by Phyſicians; taught by the learned and ſkilful; the Infirmities, Appetites, and Paſſions of our Conſtitution; the forming Societies for mutual Help and Commerce; the Inſtitution of Government, or the Subordination of ſome to the Authority of others, for preſerving good Order, for the Protection of Virtue and the Puniſhment of Vice.

Add to theſe, Wars, Peſtilence, Famine, Earthquakes, and ſuch like Events; all theſe may be reckoned among the divine Appointments or Diſpenſations, ſome for the Exerciſe of our rational Faculties in right Action; ſome for Diſcipline, Correction, and Reformation; but none meerly for Deſtruction, except where Reformation cannot be effected.

But thoſe Ways or Diſpenſations, which in Scripture are conſidered as the great Hinges of divine Providence, on which his Dealings with Mankind have turned; or as the principal Events, by which the great Purpoſes and Counſels of God's Will have been executed, are chiefly to be attended unto; becauſe right Conceptions

ceptions of theſe, under their Circumſtances and Connections, will greatly contribute to the explaining of Scripture Theologic, and demonſtrating the Harmony and Agreement of ſacred Writ.

Let us therefore take a general Survey of them.

Firſt, The Creation of the World, as already conſidered.

Secondly, The Formation of Man, after the Image of God.

Thirdly, Man being ſubjected to Trial, in order to prove his Obedience, yielded to Temptation; ſinned, and ſo became liable to the Threatening of Death. But

Fourthly, God, not willing to deſtroy his Creature, was graciouſly pleaſed in his infinite Mercy and Goodneſs, not only to mitigate this heavy Sentence, but alſo to introduce a new Diſpenſation of Grace in the Hands of an All-glorious Mediator; at the ſame Time ſubjecting the human Race to a laborious Life, to Diſeaſes and Death temporal; and thus in great Goodneſs, to ſubdue the fleſhly Principle, to ſhew the atrocious Nature of Sin, and by ſetting forth the Pride, Vanity, and Self-Sufficiency of the Creature, turn his Regard more ſteadily to the All-ſufficient Creator.

5. But Men multiplying in the Earth abuſed the Goodneſs of God, and in about 1656 Years Time became ſo wicked, that *all Fleſh had corrupted his Way, and the Earth was filled with Violence*. Then to purge the World from Iniquity, and and to recover it to a State of Righteouſneſs, God created a new Thing in the Earth, and by a Deluge of Water, deſtroyed that wicked Generation, preſerving the only Family, that remained uncorrupt in the Old World, in order to propagate Piety and Obedience in the New. At the ſame Time, and for the ſame good Purpoſes, he reduced human Life into much narrower Bounds.

6. Not long after the Deluge, to prevent a ſecond general Corruption, God introduced another Diſpenſation, by confounding the Language of Mankind; which divided the World into ſeveral diſtinct Societies, and conſequently kept them under a ſtricter Government, and better preſerved their Liberties, than if the World had been one great Empire.

7. Thus the Outrage of Violence and Rapine was, in a good Meaſure cured. But now Mankind fell into a different Iniquity, namely that of Idolatry, whereby, within 400 Years after the Flood, the Worſhip and Knowledge of the only true God was in Danger of being utterly loſt. To prevent this, the divine Wiſdom erected a new Diſpenſation by calling *Abraham* from among his idolatrous Kindred, and conſtituting his Family the Storehouſe and Standard of divine Knowledge.

To them he ſpoke and revealed himſelf at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, and ſeparated them from the reſt of World, by peculiar Laws, and religious Ceremonies, to ſecure them from the idolatrous Practices of their Neighbours. Thus they became God's peculiar People

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diſtinguiſhed above all other Nations, but with a View to the future great Benefit of all Nations; and to this Day, bleſſed be God, we experience the happy Effects of this noble Scheme, and owe to it both our Bible, and the very Being of a Goſpel Church.

8. The Family of *Abraham*, by the divine Conduct, was led into *Egypt*; and when they had been there, under grievous Oppreſſion 215 Years, and were grown numerous enough to be a Nation, God ſet himſelf at the Head of them, as their King; and in a Country much eſteemed for Learning and Arts, whither Men of Genius and Curioſity reſorted from all other Parts; upon this Stage, ſo proper, becauſe public, God, as the King of *Iſrael*, combated the King of *Egypt* and his fictitious God, and diſplayed his infinitely ſuperior Power both to deſtroy and ſave, by many Plagues inflicted upon the Land of *Egypt*, and by bringing out the Iſraelites in Oppoſition to all the Force of the King, and all the Obſtacles of Nature, and ſettling them, after they had been ſufficiently diſciplined in the Wilderneſs, in the Land of *Canaan*.

Here God ſet up his peculiar Kingdom amongſt them, and they alone of all the Nations of the Earth were the Subjects of it, and happy in its ſingular Privileges and Bleſſings; but at the ſame Time were exerciſed with various providential Diſpenſations; the general Rule of which was this: while they adhered to the Worſhip of the true God, they were always proſperous; when they declined to Idolatry, they were either oppreſſed at home, or carried captive in other Countries.

9. The long Captivity in *Babylon* was not only a Puniſhment to the Jews, but alſo a Method of publiſhing the Knowledge of the true God over all the Babyloniſh Empire, as appears evidently in the Book of *Daniel*.

The Diviſion of the Grecian Empire, which put an End to the Perſian, after the Death of *Alexander*, cauſed a new Diſperſion of the Jews, eſpecially in *Aſia Minor*, *Syria*, *Egypt*, *Cyrene*, and *Lybia*, where their Synagogues were very common.

Laſtly, when they were ſubjected to the Roman Power, their God and Religion became more known all over the Roman Empire.

Thus the Way for the Kingdom of the Meſſiah was gradually prepared; for though the Knowledge of God received from the Jews, made no public Reformation of Pagan Idolatry, yet it greatly diſpoſed Men to receive the Goſpel, when it ſhould be preached unto them. Some became Jews, many renounced Idolatry, and worſhipped no other but the living and true God, who, in the Acts of the Apoſtles are called *devout Proſelites*, *Greeks*, *thoſe that feared God*.

10. Thus we are brought to the *Coming of Chriſt*, who came *in the Fulneſs of Time*, for he came as ſoon as God by the various Methods of his Providence, had prepared the World

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to receive him. When God *had made ready a People prepared for him*, then Chriſt came, and fully explained the Nature, Laws, Extent, and Glory of the Kingdom of God, and fulfilled the great and moſt excellent Deſign of Divine Wiſdom, by giving himſelf a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the Sins of the World.

11. Then the great Myſtery of God, the Calling of other Nations, beſides the *Jews* into his Kingdom and Church, was opened, and made manifeſt by the Preaching of the Goſpel. For this purpoſe, he ſent out his Apoſtles, furniſhed with proper Powers and Credentials, eſpecially the Gift of Tongues, whereby they were enabled to communicate the wonderful Things of God to People of different Countries; and by this Means, the glad Tidings of Salvation and the glorious Lights and Privileges of the Goſpel, have reached even unto us in *Great Britain*, who dwell in the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth.

12. But as *Chriſt* came to reſtore, to explain, and by the moſt glorious Promiſes, to inforce the Law of Nations; and conſequently as his Deſign was to erect an univerſal Religion, which ſhould recommend itſelf to all People, under their ſeveral political Diſtinctions, and which therefore was to interfere with no political Eſtabliſhments, but ſhould leave them, in every Country, juſt as it found them, teaching the Nations to obſerve the Will of God as contained in his ſacred Word, in the hope of eternal Life: Upon this grand, noble, and extenſive Plan, the *Jewiſh* Polity would be ſunk to a level with all other national Governments; and the *Jew* on account of any prior, national Advantages, would have no more Claim to the Bleſſings and Privileges of the Kingdom of God, than any of the Gentiles or Nations, who in any of the moſt barbarous and deſpiſed Parts of the earth ſhould receive the Faith of the Goſpel: For in the Chriſtian Religion, *there is neither Greek nor Jew, Circumciſion, nor Uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free; but Chriſt*, that is, the Faith and Obedience, or true Religion, which Chriſt taught; *is all, and in all*, Col. iii. 11. Thus the *Jew* is fallen by that very Method of divine Wiſdom and Grace, which brought Salvation to other Nations. Thus the *diminiſhing of the Jews, is the riches of the World, and the caſting away of them is the reconciling of the World*, Rom. xi. 12, 15. or the opening a Door for the whole World to come into the peculiar Kingdom of God. This is the Idea we ought to have of the Rejection of the Jews. The Grace of God was, and is ſtill, as free to them as to other People, upon their embracing the Goſpel; but their political Conſtitution from henceforth gave them no diſtinction nor privilege in the Kingdom of God above the reſt of Mankind.

Soon after the Publication of the Goſpel, their Polity and civil Conſtitution, which otherwiſe would have remained in full Force, and have obliged them to obey its Laws, as much as the Conſtitutions of the other King-

doms of the World obliged their reſpective Subjects; were quite overthrown, by the Deſtruction of the Temple, and the Expulſion of the *Jews* out of the Land of *Canaan*, which they have not been able to recover, but remain diſperſed over the Face of the whole Earth to this Day. Thus the Goſpel Diſpenſation was erected, and ſpread and prevailed every where.

13. The next of God's Works was the permitting and managing a grand Apoſtacy and Corruption of Religion in the Chriſtian Church, foretold by the Apoſtles, and at large foretold in the book of the Revelation.

After the Apoſtles were removed out of the Word, it pleaſed God to leave ſome of the Profeſſors of the Goſpel, in Matters of Religion, to their own Ignorance, Paſſions, and Prepoſſeſſions.

Thus the Chriſtian Faith by Degrees was depraved, till the *Man of Sin* aroſe, a tyrannical uſurped Power, domineering over, and impoſing upon Conſcience, forbidding the Uſe of Underſtanding, and intoxicating the Inhabitants of the Earth with falſe and deluſive Learning, worldly Pomp and Splendour, religious Sorcery, and cruel Perſecution of the Truth.

This, as it was the propereſt Means of producing the moſt eminent and noble Characters, was to be a long and ſevere Trial of the Faith and Patience of the Saints. In the Times of this ſad Diſpenſation, it is certain, we are now living; but we hope towards the latter End of it. Thro' the whole Courſe of it. God hath variouſly appeared, both in Wrath upon the Corrupters of religion; and in Mercy for the Comfort and Support of thoſe who oppoſed them.

Thus the Wheels of Providence moved on, till the Morning of Reformation appeared in our happy Land, which for ſome Centuries had been gradually advancing and ſtill continues to advance towards the perfect Day; for a Spirit of religious Liberty, which hath been long oppreſſed, revives and gains Strength; the Scriptures are more carefully ſtudied, eccleſiaſtical Perſecution and Tyranny under every Form more generally deteſted; and Things ſeem to have a Tendency towards Love, Unity and Concord, the moſt perfect State of Religion in this World.

14. This muſt afford Satisfaction to every good Man who will chearfully join his Endeavours to bring on the next glorious Diſpenſation, which we have in Proſpect, when the *Myſtery of God* with regard to the aforeſaid corrupt State of Religion, *ſhall be finiſhed*, when *Babylon*, in all its Principles and Powers ſhall fall; when the *holy City*, the *new Jeruſalem*, ſhall come down from Heaven, and God ſhall ſet up a pure and happy State of the Church.

15. How long that State will continue, we cannot aſcertain, or have we any further clear Diſcoveries of God's Works, till the awful Day of Reſurrection, when the Lord himſelf ſhall in Perſon deſcend from Heaven

Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trump of God. *Then all they that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth ſhall awake*, and ſhall be judged, *ſome to everlaſting Life, and ſome to Shame, and everlaſting Contempt. And they that be wiſe*, under any of the Changes and Diſpenſations of this preſent World, *ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament*; *and they that* work together with God, and endeavour to *turn many unto Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

Thus have we endeavoured to give a Sketch of the Works of God from the Beginning of the World to the Conſummation of all Things; and very beautiful and ſurpriſing would the whole appear, could we ſee them in a full and clear Light, as they are held forth to our View in the ſacred Writings, of the Harmony and Agreement of which they are, among other Conſiderations, an undoubted Evidence.

As Scripture is the beſt Explication of Scripture, we ſhall make ſome general Remarks, founded on the ſame, which will greatly aſſiſt our Conceptions of, and Enquiries into theſe very important Points.

1. All the divine Diſpenſations are agreeable to the moſt perfect Rules of Righteouſneſs and Truth. Nothing falſe, unjuſt, or injurious, can be charged on the Ways and Works of the Almighty; for (*Deut.* xxxii. 4.) *all* God's *Ways are Judgment*; *a God of Truth, and without Iniquity*; *juſt and right is he.* Pſ. cxlv. 17. *The* Lord *is righteous in all his Ways, and holy* ſteadily acting according to Truth *in all its Works.*

2dly, The Ways of God are not to be conſidered as the Effect of Neceſſity, as if the End propoſed could not poſſibly have been gained by other Means; but as the Reſult of Choice, or divine Wiſdom, preferring ſuch particular Methods to any other; as beſt adapted to our Circumſtances, or all theſe conſidered, as the moſt likely to make Mankind wiſe and happy.

For Inſtance, it is by the Diſpenſation of God, that our preſent Life is ſuſtained by Food; not becauſe it is impoſſible we ſhould live in any other Way, for the Almighty could ſuſtain our Life in perfect Health by an Act of his own immediate Power. Again our Food is produced by the Influence of the Sun, by Rain, the Fertility of the Ground; not becauſe Food could not be otherwiſe produced, for God could by an immediate Act of his own Power, create Food for us every Day, as he did for the Iſraelites in the Wilderneſs; but this Method of ſuſtaining our Life is a Continuance of divine Wiſdom, to ſhew himſelf to our Underſtandings, and to exerciſe our Induſtry in providing a Subſiſtence, and to be mutually helpful to each other. Hence the Works of God, in Scripture, are aſſigned to his Wiſdom, *See Pſal.* civ. 24. *Prov.* viii. 22.

3dly, All the Diſpenſations of God are calculated to promote Obedience to his holy Will; or to promote Holineſs of Heart and Life. This is the Line which runs through the Whole;

Whole; for, however our Circumſtances may differ from thoſe of our firſt Parents, the End of our Being is the ſame as theirs, and we, as well as they are upon Trial, that we by Grace may have Habits of Holineſs confirmed in us, and be fitted for eternal Life, which is the *Inheritance of thoſe that are ſanctified.*

Though it is a melancholy Reflection to conſider, how the Wickedneſs of Men, hath from Time to Time fatigued the Patience of God, yet it muſt give Pleaſure to obſerve, how his Goodneſs hath applied various Remedies to prevent or heal the Corruptions of Mankind.

In whatſoever Way they have gone aſtray from him, his Wiſdom has never been at a Loſs to find out the moſt proper Expedients to reclaim him. His gracious Deſign is evidently to ſave a ſinful World, and to carry Religion both in its perſonal Influences, and general Prevalence, to the higheſt Perfection our preſent Condition will admit.

This Remark moſt naturally Suggeſts the following Obſervation in Proof of the Authenticity and divine Original of the Scriptures which we call *the Bible*.

" If ſuch a Deſign, namely the Salvation of a ſinful World, and the Perfection of Holineſs ſhall appear to run through the Books of the Old and New Teſtament, a Man may, with infinitely greater Propriety, ſuppoſe the moſt perfect Drama, to have been written by a Number of the greateſt Mad-men or Idiots, by Piece-meal, in different Ages; than imagine a Thread of ſuch an End and Mean running through above forty Writers, in no more than 1600 Years, to be the Work of ſo many Enthuſiaſts. Or, we may as well ſuppoſe the World to be framed by meer Chance, or the moſt magnificent beautiful and convenient Palace, that the Imagination can figure to itſelf, to be built by Men unacquainted with all the Rules of Architecture, in ſeveral diſtant Ages, and without any Model to build by, and to be ſupported by meer Chance; or imagine ſuch an Unity of Deſign (as is deſcribed under this third Remark) to be the Reſult of Enthuſiaſm and Accident mixed together." Lord *Barrington's* Eſſay on the divine Diſpenſation. Part 1. Preface Page 26.

4. The Scriptural Diſpenſations, which have been conſecrated, were ſeverally adapted to the different Capacities and Improvements, as alſo to the moral State and Circumſtances of Mankind. The ſeveral Ages may be compared to the ſeveral Stages of human Life, Infancy, Youth, Manhood and Old Age.

Now, as a Man under due Culture gradually improves in Knowledge and Wiſdom, from Infancy to old Age, ſo we may conceive of the World, as gradually improving in mental and religious Attainments under the ſeveral Divine Diſpenſations: which Diſpenſations have in every period been ſuitable to the Improvements in Knowledge, which then ſubſiſted in the World.

Adam, when created, may be conſidered as a Child without Knowledge, Learning

Learning and Experience, and therefore the Diſpenſation he was under, was very different from that, which we are under, who enjoy the Benefit and Light of ſo many preceding Diſpenſations.

Thus Mankind, reflecting upon preceding Diſpenſations, will be admoniſhed and directed to reform old Errors and Corruptions; and thus, even the monſtrous Apoſtacy of the Church of *Rome*, may ſerve to introduce and eſtabliſh the moſt perfect State of Chriſtianity, that we expect will ſucceed the Diſpenſation, under which we live.

5. All God's Diſpenſations have a practical Tendency, or direct to Holineſs or Obedience to his Law. By none of his Works did God intend to render Wickedneſs impracticable; and he has always provided ſufficient Support for Integrity and Virtue. With this very Sentiment, the Prophecy in *Daniel*, and in the *Revelation*, is ſealed up, *Rev.* xxii. 11. *He that is Unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is Filthy, let him be Filthy ſtill.* That is to ſay, there is no Cure for the obſtinately blind and wicked; neither are the Ways of God intended to purify thoſe who will not be made clean; but after all that God has done, *The wicked (Dan.* xii. 10.) *ſhall* be left *to do wickedly. And none of the wicked will underſtand, but the wiſe will underſtand. But he that is righteous, let him be righteous ſtill; and he that is holy, let him be holy ſtill.* Hoſ. xiv. 9. *Who is wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe Things? Prudent, and he ſhall know them? For the Ways of Jehovah are right, and the Juſt ſhall walk in them.* The Sincere and Upright, who chuſe the Way of Truth, or turn from Sin unto Righteouſneſs, the righteous and merciful God will never forſake.

They make a wiſe Improvement of his Diſpenſation; and under all Trials and Afflictions, he will guide and ſupport them; and their Path ſhall be as the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more to the perfect Day.

6. *Known unto God are all his Works, from the Beginning of the World*, ſaith the Apoſtle *James*. Then all God's Works were formed and planned in his Counſels, and lay under his Eye in one comprehenſive View, and therefore muſt be perfectly conſiſtent.

One uniform Scheme muſt be laid, and one even Thread of Deſign muſt run through the whole. They are not the Reſult of ſudden, incoherent Thoughts, but a well-digeſted Plan, formed upon the juſteſt Principles by him, who ſeeth all his Works from the Beginning to the End. Whence it follows, that if we do not diſcern one coherent Deſign in the divine Diſpenſations; or if we make any one Part claſh with the reſt, we may be ſure we do not underſtand them.

Goodneſs was the Principle of Creation, God made Man becauſe he delighted to communicate Being and Happineſs, conſequently Goodneſs and Fatherly Love, which was the Beginning and Foundation of God's Works, muſt run equally thro' them all, from firſt to laſt.

7. Previous Notice was given of ſome of the principal Diſpenſations, either for Warning, or to prepare Men for the Reception of them.

The Deluge was preached by *Noah* one hundred and twenty Years before it came to paſs.

The Jewiſh Diſpenſation was predicted to *Abraham* four hundred and thirty Years before-hand.

Jeremiah foretold the Bayloniſh Captivity. And *Paul* and *John* at large predicted and deſcribed the grand Apoſtacy.

But the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, and the Goſpel-Diſpenſation, run thro' the whole, from the Beginning to the End, in a leſs or greater Degree of Light; and it was fitting that this, which is the chief of God's Works, ſhould receive the brighteſt Evidence from Prophecy; therefore it was fit it ſhould not be introduced, till it had received that Evidence, which in Scripture is called the *Fullneſs of Time*, Gal. iv. 4.

8. The Diſpenſations of God are intended for our Study and Contemplation; and it is a ſingular Advantage to form right Notions of them, becauſe they will enlarge our Conception of God, and influence our Diſpoſitions toward him.

If we judge truly of God's Works, we ſhall have honourable Ideas of the divine Agent. His Wiſdom, his Goodneſs and Truth, will ſtand in a fair Light, and we ſhall confeſs him infinitely worthy of our higheſt Regard. Then we ſhall think of God with Admiration, Pleaſure and Delight, (Pſ. xcii. 4. *Thou Lord haſt made me glad through thy Work; I will triumph in the Works of thy Hand*) and ſhall ſerve and follow him with willing Minds.

But if we form ſuch Conceptions of the Ways of God, as repreſent them to be arbitary and tyrannical, inconſiſtent with all our Notions of Juſtice and Goodneſs, the Effect of ſovereign Will, without either Reaſon or Love, he muſt ſtand before our Thoughts in the moſt frightful Colours. The moſt horrible Gloom will be drawn over the Perfections of the beſt of Beings, our Minds will be filled with Darkneſs and Dread; and if we worſhip him at all, our Worſhip and Obedience will not be the free and generous Duty of Sons; but the joyleſs, conſtrained Drudgery of Slaves.

9. It muſt be remembered, that the Works of God are unſearchable, and paſt finding out to Perfection. *Pſ.* xcii. 5. *O Lord, how great are thy Works, and thy Thoughts are very deep.* From a juſt Senſe of the unfathomable Nature of the divine Diſpenſation, the Apoſtle concludes a Diſcourſe upon the Rejection of the Jews, and the Calling of the Gentiles, with this ſolemn Exclamation, *O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments! And his Ways paſt finding out*, Rom. ix. 33.

It becomes us to admire and adore the Counſels of infinite Wiſdom, and to acquieſce, where we cannot gain a full Knowledge of them, *Rev.* xv. 13. *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty!* We cannot

cannot comprehend the Ways of God in their full Extent, in all their largeſt Views, and remoteſt Connections. He therefore that is wiſe, will not cavil at them, nor fooliſhly endeavour to pry into them, beyond the Bound of Revelation, and of human Underſtanding.

10. Under all our preſent Darkneſs, and under every Diſpenſation, an honeſt Heart, ſincerely deſirous to know the Truth, is ſeriouſly inquiſitive after it, meekly ſubmiſive to what God hath revealed and commanded; willing to work together with him; patiently perſevering in Well-doing; ſuch a Temper, and ſuch a Conduct, is the beſt and ſafeſt Guide under every Diſpenſation, will enable us to follow God, to comply with every Deſign of his Providence, to overcome in every Hour of Trial, and will lead us to eternal Life.

To ſuch a Character, as well as to *Daniel* (Chapter xii. 13.) It is the Language of divine Grace and Goodneſs—*But walk thou*, thou honeſt, upright Man, *thy Way to the End*; take Courage and Comfort, walk on, perſevere in the Path of Truth, and Integrity: for after all the Trials and Diſquietudes of this World, *Thou ſhalt reſt, and ſtand in thy Lot*, the Lot of pious and faithful Souls, *at the End of the Days.*

Having thus endeavoured to demonſtrate the Connection of the Old and New Teſtament, or Harmony and Agreement of the ſacred Writers, by various Proofs and Arguments drawn from the State, Circumſtances and Conditions of the Writers, the Nature of their Subjects and the divine Diſpenſations in general, and ſubjoined ſuch Remarks as may tend to inſtruct and improve the ſerious Chriſtian in the Knowledge of his holy Profeſſion, we propoſe in the following Chapter, in order to guard him from the reigning Infidelity of the Age, to conſider ſome of the moſt general Objections that are brought againſt a divine Revelation; and to aſſiſt ſuch Anſwers as we have collected from the ableſt Divines, and found by our own Obſervation.

CHAP. VIII.

Anſwers to divers Objections brought againſt the Scripture as a divine Revelation.

WE ſhall begin with the moſt general.

Objection. *Revelation is abſolutely needleſs; Nature and Reaſon being ſufficient to direct any Man in the plain Way of his Duty, without any ſupernatural Aſſiſtance.*

Anſwer. It muſt be allowed, in general, that Nature and Reaſon are ſufficient to direct any Man in the Way of his Duty, ſo far as God, in his Circumſtance expects Duty from him; for God expects Duty from every Perſon only in Proportion to the Light he enjoys, and to the Talents he had received.

But the Experience of all Mankind ſhews, that Nature and Reaſon, by themſelves, will advance but a little

little Way in the Knowledge of divine Things.

Perſons in a Land like ours, where in ſpite of themſelves, their Nature and Reaſon, are enlightened and directed in a conſiderable Degree by Revelation, may talk of the Sufficiency and Perfection of Nature and Reaſon; but if we look into thoſe Nations, which are perfect Strangers to Revelation, we ſhall find them groſsly ignorant of the Being and Perfections of God, the Diſpenſations of his Providence, the proper Honour and Worſhip that is due to him; the Prayers we may addreſs to his Goodneſs, and the Hopes we may entertain of his Acceptance.

They know nothing of the Pardon of Sin, the Promiſes of God's Mercy and Bleſſing, nor of any thing belonging to the Covenant of his Love, the preſent Privileges, or future Glories of his Kingdom.

The Reſurrection from the Dead, the Day of Judgment, the immortal Life, which will be the Reward of the Pious and Juſt, and the everlaſting Death, which will be the ſad Lot of all the impenitently Wicked, they are altogether, or in a great Meaſure unacquainted with. But all theſe are great Principles in Religion, and of great Force, to purify our Spirits, enable our Minds, animate our Hopes, and guard us againſt the Power and Influence of bodily Appetites, and the Violence of Temptation.

However others may fare, in a great Degree of Darkneſs and Ignorance, through the favourable Allowance of God; yet ſurely every Man's Reaſon will tell him, that ſuperior Knowledge, and a more extenſive View of the divine Diſpenſations, is abſolutely neceſſary to a higher Degree of Goodneſs, Comfort, Obedience, and Devotedneſs to God.

What the Poets relate may be true, That ſome primitive Mortals ſubſiſted only upon Acorns and Water, in Dens and Caves; and we know there are ſome Parts of the World where the naked Inhabitants enjoy very few Conveniences of Life: but ſhall we therefore deſpiſe the Bleſſings of Agriculture, and the various Accommodations which make Life happy and comfortable, and ſay they are needleſs? Would any Man in this Land think of turning out naked into the Fields and Woods becauſe it is poſſible, and may ſomewhere in Fact be true, that Man may live upon wild Fruit and Water, without Cloaths, or any Habitation, but the Dens and Caves of the Earth? Corn, and other agreeable Food, Clothes, and commodious Habitations, are neceſſary to our Kind and Degree of Life in the natural World, and ſo is Revelation to a correſponding Degree and Kind of ſpiritual Life.

The Food, Raiment, and Habitations we enjoy, are the Gift of God's Goodneſs; and it is our Duty to accept and uſe them with Thankfulneſs.

In like Manner, Revelation is the Gift of God, and, as ſuch, it ought to be received; and as it gives

greater

greater Light, we are obliged to attend accordingly to it, becauſe we muſt in the Nature of Things be accountable for it.

We may add upon this Head, that however Nature and Reaſon in their pure and moſt perfect State, may be ſufficient to direct in the Way of Duty; yet when Nature is corrupted, and Reaſon obſcured, or almoſt extinguiſhed, they are by no Means ſufficient to reſtore and recover themſelves to the Knowledge and Obedience of the Truth, becauſe they themſelves, who ſhould be the Means of healing themſelves, are ſick and diſabled. But it was the primary Intention of Revelation to reſtore and preſerve the Knowledge of God and of his Will, in a corrupt and degenerate World.

So far therefore we ſee no Objection againſt Revelation; but it may be both very needful, and a very great Bleſſing to Mankind.

Objection. *If this Bleſſing* (Revelation) *was given to all Mankind, who all equally ſtand in Need of it; but whereas it is confined only to a Part of Mankind, while others are left to grope in the Dark, How can it be accounted the Gift of Divine Goodneſs? For is not God equally the God, Father and Saviour of all Men? How then can it be conſiſtent with his Beneficence to confine the Light of Revelation to ſome, which would ſo much contribute to the Happineſs of All? May we not then conclude, that a partial Revelation is no Revelation from God, nor worthy of our Regard?*

Anſwer. It is very certain, that God is the Saviour of all Men, that he is good to all, and that his tender Mercies are over all his Works. But while we are ſure of this, we are not equally ſure, that our Reaſon is a perfect Rule for adjuſting the Diſtribution of his Benefits.

On the other Hand, we may be very ſure that it is not. From the loweſt to the higheſt Degree of Exiſtence, from a Grain of Sand, to the moſt glorious Angel in Heaven, every higher Degree of Being is an inconteſtable Proof, that God may very juſtly, according to his own Wiſdom and good Pleaſure, beſtow what Gifts, Endowments, Privileges and Advantages upon his Creatures he ſees fit. He is Debtor to none. Our Underſtanding is no Meaſure of his Wiſdom, neither are his Diſpenſations to be cenſured by our narrow and imperfect Judgments.

Indeed it ſeems as reaſonable to make an Objection againſt the Goodneſs of divine Providence, becauſe all Men are not rich alike; wiſe alike, or learned alike.

Would not that Man appear very weak, who ſhould be diſpleaſed that God had given him abundance of the good Things of this Life, becauſe there are many about him in a low Condition? Would not that Man appear very abſurd, who ſhould deem his ſuperior Knowledge and Learning to be no valuable Advantage, becauſe there are Numbers of illiterate Perſons, who are much below him in Underſtanding?

Is it not then equally abſurd to deny divine Revelation, or to argue againſt it, as improperly beſtowed, and unworthy of the divine Goodneſs, becauſe it is not communicated to all the World, as well as to ourſelves? It is very unnatural to diſpute againſt Goodneſs in any Reſpect, and very preſumptous to direct God how to beſtow it, either as to Quantity, Quality, or Extent.

If it is a Fact, that he has given us any Bleſſing, our Duty ſurely is to be thankful, and to enjoy and improve it, whether he has beſtowed more or leſs upon our Fellow-Creatures; being certain, where leſs is given, leſs will be required; and that the Judge of the whole Earth will, in the laſt Day, deal with all in perfect Equity and Goodneſs.

Objection. *If Revelation is ſuch a Bleſſing, ſurely it would appear in the Fruits and Effects of it. Whereas great Numbers, if not the generality of thoſe that enjoy Revelation, are as bad as the very Heathens, who are abſolute Strangers to it.*

Beſides, ſuch Evils have been produced, ſuch Variance, Diſcord, and bloody Perſecutions, on Account of revealed Religion, that it may juſtly be queſtioned, whether it has not done more Harm than Good?

What Reaſon then have we to ſay, it is a valuable Gift, or worthy of the Father of the Univerſe?

Anſwer. *Natural* Cauſes, by a Sort of Neceſſity, produce their *proper* Effects; ſo Fire always burns combuſtible Matter; and a good Medicine heals a Diſeaſe; and that is no Fire, which will not burn proper Matter, nor that a good Medicine, which never heals a Diſeaſe.

But *moral* Cauſes are of a different Nature, becauſe their Efficacy depends upon the Choice and Diſpoſition of the Subjects to whom they are applied; therefore a moral Means or Cauſe may be in itſelf moſt excellent, though it happens to produce no good Effects; nay, though accidentally it may prove the Occaſion of very bad Effects.

Our Lord's Miniſtry and Doctrine was perfectly Divine, and yet it had but a ſmall Influence for Good upon the Jewiſh Nation; nay, on the other Hand, excited their Malice to that Degree, that they ſlew the Prince of Life.

Whatever Effect therefore Revelation may have produced in the World, ſtill it is true, that it is a valuable Gift, and worthy of the divide Goodneſs. But it muſt even be ever remembered, that it is abſolutely neceſſary to our receiving any Benefits from the Goſpel, that we be truly deſirous to ſhake off the Yoke of Sin, and to cultivate and improve our Minds in Virtue and true Holineſs. If therefore we expect there is any Life or Power provided in the Goſpel, which will have a good effect, while the Mind is utterly averſe to its Doctrines and Precepts, we deceive ourſelves.

The Goſpel encourages no ſuch Expectations, that are utterly inconſiſtent with the grand Deſign of revealing the Grace and Mercy of God, which

is

is to awaken our Conſciences and to excite us to Care and Diligence in our ſpiritual Concerns.

It is acknowledged that our own Thoughts, Deſires, and Endeavours will effect but little, without the Help of divine Power; but yet, if we chuſe to live in Ignorance, Unbelief, or any Branch of Impiety and Wickedneſs; if our Hearts are ſo attached to the World, ſo engroſſed by Buſineſs, ſenſual Pleaſures and Amuſements, that we can ſpare no ſerious Reflections for God, our Souls and a future World; there is no Proſpect of our being ſaved by any Grace that the Goſpel has provided in Jeſus Chriſt.

It is certain, that the Goſpel has produced many good Effects, and will always do ſo, where it is received and attended to; but as for thoſe Perſons who make it the Occaſion of Variance, Hatred, and Perſecution; it cannot be ſaid of them with any Propriety, that they do receive or attend to Revelation; nay, it is very certain, that in fact, they do not.

Nor muſt we allow, that in Popiſh Countries, were Corruption of Manners greatly prevails, and Superſtition, Idolatry, and Perſecution are eſtabliſhed, they enjoy the Benefit of Revelation, when we know that for many Ages, the Uſe of the Scriptures has been forbidden, and a Religion taught and profeſſed, which is foreign to the Word of God.

Objection. *How can we be ſure, that we have now in Poſſeſſion, thoſe very Books entire and perfect, in which Revelation was originally recorded? May they not in Length of Time be loſt or quite altered from what they were at firſt? Or ſo varied and changed by Tranſcribers and Tranſlators, that we cannot be ſure that we have the true and genuine Senſe of Scripture.*

Anſwer. No Nation in the World can be more ſure of any of their publick Acts and Records, preſerved in their Archives with the utmoſt Care, than we are of the Truth of the Scriptures now in our Hands. The Jews preſerved the Books of *Moſes*, as the Laws of the Kingdom, in the moſt ſacred Part of their Tabernacle and Temple. Thoſe Books, the Pſalms and Prophets, were every where publickly read in their Synagogues, every Week on the Sabbath Day; their learned Men with the utmoſt Exactneſs inſpected and guarded the Text, even ſo as to count the very Number of Letters in every Book.

In ſhort our Lord and the Apoſtles freqently quote *Moſes*, the *Pſalms*, and *Prophets*, without any Intimation that thoſe Books were in any Reſpect altered or depraved. Whereas, had they indeed been corrupted, we need not doubt but our bleſſed Saviour, would have reformed that, as well as, or rather more than any other Inſtance of Corruption among the Jews.

From the Time of our Saviour, the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament were publickly read by the Jews in all Parts of the World; and thoſe Scriptures and the Apoſtolic Writings as they came out, were read by Chriſtians every where in their Aſ-

ſemblies,

ſemblies, and diſperſed over all the World where the Religion of Jeſus was profeſſed; as containing the Laws and Rules of the Religion he taught, inſomuch that it was impoſſible to corrupt or deprave them. For this Reaſon even the Church of *Rome*, or thoſe who erected that Antichriſtian Power, never durſt attempt to make the leaſt Alteration in the Scriptures, as knowing it would be to no Purpoſe; but inſtead of that they claimed the ſole Right of interpreting the Scriptures, which ſerved their End full as well as corrupting them; for he who has Power to put what Senſe he pleaſes upon a Law, may as effectually make it void, as he who deſtroys it.

As for Tranſcribers, or Tranſlators, it is for the ſame Reaſon impoſſible they ſhould make any material Alteration; it is in fact true, that they have not; for you may take any Tranſlation, in any Language, or by any Party among Chriſtians, Papiſts as well as Proteſtants, and you will find they all agree in all Things relating to the Covenant of the Lord our God, and the ſeveral Duties to which we are thereby obliged, though they may differ in ſome Things, and Commentators may put their own Senſe upon others. But the main Points have been preſerved pure and entire in every Tranſlation from the Beginning to this Day.

Thus it is preſumed theſe Objections, which are the Principal that are alledged, are effectually removed. Upon the whole they ſeem not to proceed from a ſober Mind, ſincerely deſirous of the beſt Knowledge and Inſtruction, for how can that Perſon be deemed a true Scholar, or ſincerely deſirous of improving in uſeful Learning, who meeting with a Book excellently adapted to that Purpoſe, refuſes to make uſe of it, becauſe he is already poſſeſſed of the Faculty of Reaſon, or becauſe it is not in the Hands of every Body, as ſome have made a bad Uſe of it, or he doubts whether it may not have undergone ſome Alteration, when the Book in itſelf conſidered, is an excellent Performance, and capable of giving him the moſt profitable Inſtruction.

The Bible, as we now have it in our Hands, thanks be to God, is by far the moſt excellent Book in our Language, and as we have it in our Tranſlation, in itſelf, ſetting aſide all Circumſtances, a pure and plentiful Fountain of divine Knowledge, and particularly of the Goſpel of our Salvation: So that whoever ſtudies the Bible, the Engliſh Bible, is ſure of gaining the Knowledge and Faith, which if duly applied to the Heart and Converſation, will infallibly guide him to eternal Life.

For this Reaſon then it is our Wiſdom and Duty, to be frequent in reading, and meditating upon the Bible, that our Minds being well furniſhed with heavenly Wiſdom, and our Hearts tinctured with a divine Spirit, we may be prepared for Glory, Honour, and Immortality.

Theſe Objections have been anſwered, not ſo much from a Deſign of convincing the cavilling, obſtinate Infidel, as a Deſire of ſatisfying the Mind

Mind and Conſcience of the ſincere Believer, that his Faith is founded on the moſt ſubſtantial Grounds, and that notwithſtanding all the Art and Sophiſtry of the Enemies of the Goſpel, the moſt ſolid Reaſons are to be aſſigned for the Hope that is in him, and the Confidence he repoſes in the God of all Grace, Mercy, and Truth.

CHAP. IX.

On the Neceſſity of an extraordinary Revelation from God, as deduced from the depraved State of human Nature.

THE Scriptures as contained in the Bible are the Word of God, they are the Language and Addreſs of the univerſal Father to his Children in this World, whom he addreſſes, in the Character of Sovereign Lord of the Univerſe, and ſtrictly enjoins to obey his Voice, The Scriptures are given *by Inſpiration of God, and are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*, 2 Tim. iii. 16.

The Glory of God indeed is to be ſeen in all the Works of his Hands; and the Speech of his Almighty Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs is to be heard in the Appearances of Creation which are daily before our Eyes, *Pſal.* xix. 1. &c.

Mankind in a faithful Uſe of their natural Powers might know God, *Rom.* i. 19. *For that which may be known of God is manifeſt in them; for God hath ſhewed it unto them, (for the inviſible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things that are made,)* ſo that even the Heathens, who have no other Rule than the Light of Nature, THEY might be *without Excuſe*, if they are totally ignorant of God.

But how much Mankind in all Ages have abuſed and miſapplied their Underſtandings is notoriouſly evident, and therefore it muſt be evident how much they ſtand in need of an extraordinary Revelation, to correct their Errors, to reduce them to the Obedience of God, and to ſecure them from relapſing into Idolatry, and Apoſtaſy from him.

No Book certainly can contain more evident Marks of ſuch Revelation, than the Scriptures, eminently ſo called, which we are happily poſſeſſed of. There we have the fulleſt and cleareſt Account of the Nature and Perfection of God, beyond what the World at beſt could have attained to, and far beyond what could, in the ordinary Courſe of Things, have been preſerved through ſucceeding Generations.

The Knowledge of God not being a meer ſpeculative Truth, but having near Connection with our Actions, would conſequently, as the Morals of Men are very liable to be corrupted, have been proportionably obſcured, till it had in a Manner vaniſhed away, which we know hath in fact been true.

In the Scriptures, as in a durable Storehouſe, not to be demoliſhed by Time, as uncertain Tradition, we have the moſt noble Diſcoveries of the Nature and Perfections of God, as he is our Maker, our Father, Owner, Ruler, and daily Benefactor; as he is glorious in all his Attributes, as he is infinite, and independent, eternal, and unchangeable in his Being, Knowledge, Wiſdom and Power, as perfectly holy, good, righteous and true.

Theſe Glories of the divine Nature are deſcribed, not in the Way of philoſophical Diſſertations; not by a Series of abſtract Reaſoning, which are of little or no Uſe to the Bulk of Mankind, who have but little Leiſure, and perhaps leſs Inclination to attend to the curious and abſtruſe Deductions of Reaſon; not thus are the Glories of the divine Nature delineated in Scripture, but exhibited in a long, eaſy and intelligible Series of Facts and Events, wherein God hath manifeſted his Goodneſs, Wiſdom, Power and Juſtice, from the Beginning of the World.

In this Way the Mind, with very little Labour of Thought, is at once convinced of the Being and Perfections of God, and ſtruck with Admiration, Reverence, Love, and thoſe other Actions, which the Knowledge of God ſhould produce in us.

In the Scriptures, God appears not only in every View that the moſt profound Philoſophy can diſcover, but alſo in a practical Light. We are there taught, that great as he is in himſelf, he is our God and Father, that he hath from his own Immenſity of Being, given us Being; that he conſtantly regards us, intereſts himſelf in our Affairs, is concerned for our Welfare; that our Safety is in his Favour, and that in his Favour, and under his Protection, we are infinitely ſafe and happy; that we are accountable to him for our Actions; that we are continually under his Eye; that he hath taken us into the neareſt Relation to himſelf, and that in order to promote our future and eternal Happineſs, he hath carried on various Diſpenſations from the Beginning of the World.

Thus we not only in the eaſieſt and cleareſt Way, learn God and his Perfections from Scripture, but we learn them in a Manner the moſt proper and powerful to engage and unite our Hearts to God, and cauſe us to conſider ourſelves infinitely intereſted in his Attributes and Perfections.

In the Scriptures we may not only with Eaſe learn our Duty in the fulleſt Extent, but at the ſame Time by the numerous Examples of pious Men in all Ages, we may ſee that it is practicable, and may ſee how to engage in it. By reading the Scriptures, we may diſcern the Reaſonableneſs and the Beauty of Holineſs, and alſo be furniſhed with the ſtrongeſt Arguments and Motives to embrace it and to perſevere therein. We are alſo aſſured in ſacred Writ of the divine Aid and Aſſiſtance in our Duties, Trials and Temptations; of the divine Conſolation and Encouragement in all our Troubles and Diſtreſſes; and if, through the divine Grace,

Grace, we perſevere in Faith and Holineſs, of everlaſting Glory in the Realms of Bliſs.

In this ſacred Treaſure we have the trueſt and moſt effectual Rules, whereby to form our Lives; not ſimple Propoſitions, not mere Lectures of dull Morality, but Inſtructions intermixed with the promiſe of a divine Power to work mightily in us, and renew us into the divine Life and ſpiritual Nature.

Here Religion appears in all its Truth, Luſtre, Sweetneſs and Majeſty. Here it is arrayed in all its Charms, nor as a ſour, ſevere, moroſe, gloomy Principle, forbidding Enjoyment, and the Parent only of Sorrow, Horror and Deſpair; but as our Life, our Glory, our Peace, our Joy, as giving us the trueſt Reliſh and Enjoyment of Life, as the Source of the moſt ſolid Pleaſure and Comfort, as uniting us to God, as lodging us for ever in the Arms of Almighty Love and Goodneſs, as leading to and preparing for endleſs Joy and Pleaſure at his right Hand.

As to Sin and Wickedneſs, Philoſophers have ſaid much concerning the odious Nature of Vice, that it is Evil, and the worſt of Evils, that it is the Diſeaſe and Deformity of the Mind, pernicious to the Health of the Body, and ruinous to the worldly Intereſt.

Their Reflections were ſo far juſt; but the Benefit of them were confined to Men of Letters and Study; the common People received little or no Advantage from them: but in the Scriptures, the meaneſt Minds are favoured with far better Inſtructions than they could give.

There Sin is not only ſet forth in all its odious Colours, in all its pernicious effects, as to the preſent Life, but its deadly Nature is demonſtrated as it ſtands in Contrariety to God, as it is the Tranſgreſſion of his holy Law, as it expoſeth us to his Diſpleaſure, and is oppoſite to all the Ends of our Creation, and conſequently as deſerving of Death.

In Scripture we learn, that God will puniſh the Impenitent Workers of Iniquity with everlaſting Deſtruction, and purge out of his Kingdom every Thing that offends. All this is ſo plainly and powerfully inculcated upon the Mind, by many dreadful Examples of the divine Vengeance upon ungodly Men throughout the whole Series of Scripture Hiſtory, by many expreſs Declarations of God's Wrath, and ſo many Exhortations of his Goodneſs and Mercy, to turn from every evil Way, that no one who carefully and ſeriouſly reads the Scriptures, can miſs, not only of ſeeing the Evil, the Irregularity and Deformity of Sin, but of having his Mind affected with it, and being wrought into the moſt ſettled Deteſtation of it.

With Regard to Pardon of Sin, the wiſeſt of Philoſophers ſeem to have little or no Notion of it. They conſidered it very ſuperficially, as repugnant to the divine Perfections, and therefore ſay little or nothing, whether God would be propitious to Sin-

Sinners, or in what Way his Wiſdom thought proper to pardon Tranſgreſſion.

Sacrifices were frequent among them; but they ſeem to have underſtood nothing of their true Nature and End, nor were at all ſolicitous to enquire into them. In Fact they did not underſtand the true Demerit of Sin, and therefore of courſe muſt be in the Dark as to the Remiſſion of it. But all theſe things are open and obvious to the weakeſt Capacity in Scripture.

How much the World was in the Dark about a future State, without a Revelation, is well known; and how clearly the World to come is opened to us in the awful Proſpects of eternal Happineſs, or endleſs Perdition, can be concealed from none who are ever ſo little acquainted with the Goſpel of Chriſt.

Theſe Things duly attended to, will ſhew the precious Value of the holy Scripture, that God's Word is Truth, and able to make us wiſe unto Salvation, and further demonſtrate that it is our Duty to be much in reading them.

Reading the Scriptures is one of the firſt Principles of our Religion, as we are Chriſtians; becauſe our Profeſſion is built wholly upon the Scriptures. We juſtly own no other Rule of Faith but the Word of God, *Eph.* ii. 10. *We are built upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the Chief Corner Stone.* And we are built upon no other Foundation.

If we are Chriſtians indeed, however we may uſe or value the Writings of Men, we make not them, not the very beſt of them, the Rule of our Faith, but the Word of God alone.

But that Rule ought to be thoroughly peruſed and digeſted, otherwiſe how good ſoever in itſelf, or how much ſoever we profeſs to take it for our Rule, it is in Fact no Rule to us.

The Word of God is the Guide of our Actions, *It is a Lamp unto our Feet, and a Light unto our Paths*, Pſ. cxix. 105. Should we not then diligently ſtudy the Word of God, that we may not wander from his Commandments?

The Word of God is the Spring of all our Hopes and Comforts. There and there alone, we have the rich and immenſe Treaſure of the divine Promiſes; and from thence alone, we can draw ſolid Support and Conſolation, in a dark Hour of Trial and Affliction.

In ſhort, to all the valuable Purpoſes of Knowledge and Life, the Scriptures infinitely excel all human Compoſitions whatever. The Writings of Men are but as the twinkling Stars to that Ocean of Light, which is daily poured forth from the Body of the Sun. Of all the Means of Knowledge and Wiſdom in the World, none are to be compared with the Word of God. We ſhould therefore have our Eyes intent upon the Light, for God hath given us this invaluable Treaſure, the holy Scriptures, that we ſhould make them our Study.

It muſt be carefully obſerved, that it

it is not enough to be much in reading the Scriptures, but while we read, we ſhould employ all our Attention to underſtand them. The Scripture may be underſtood, but evidently not in every Degree by every Man; for as there are various Sorts and Degrees of Knowledge in Scripture, ſome perhaps, at preſent, beyond the Reach of any Man that ever yet was in the World; and as there are in Men various Capacities and Degrees of Learning, ſo it is manifeſt, all Men cannot attain to the ſame Degree of Underſtanding in divine Things; but there muſt neceſſarily be a great Difference between the Knowledge of one Man and another in Matters of Faith and Revelation.

This ſhews the Abſurdity of the Popiſh Scheme, which pretends to reduce the Chriſtian Faith in all its Parts to a certain invariable Standard, to which every Man either explicitly or implicitly, either with or without Underſtanding, muſt conform.

This alſo ſhews, that notwithſtanding it is our Duty to communicate Knowledge to one another, it is repugnant to the Nature and Genius of Chriſtianity to quarrel with one another, or to be diſpleaſed, becauſe we have not all the ſame Degree of Underſtanding in Matters of Faith; becauſe this, according to the preſent Conſtitution of our Minds, and of the Revelation God hath given us, which he never intended ſhould be equally underſtood by all, is abſolutely impracticable.

But although the Scriptures are not underſtood in every Degree by every Man, yet they may be underſtood by every Man, ſo far as God requireth; that is, ſo far as he is capable of underſtanding them; for what a Man can underſtand, he may underſtand, if he is not wanting to himſelf.

Further, thoſe Things in Scripture, which are of the higheſt Importance, and conducive to eternal Life and Salvation, are eaſy to be underſtood, and therefore how perplexed ſo ever other Things may be, about which Men have differed, and which Men by their Difference, have more perplexed; the grand Principles of Faith in Chriſt, and Obedience to the Rules of the Goſpel are ſo evident, that any ordinary Capacity, may with due Care and Attention, eaſily gain a complete Knowledge of them.

The Things chiefly to be underſtood in Scripture, are PRINCIPLES, or the Grounds and Reaſons of Things and PRECEPTS, which are the Rules of Duty; now if we miſtake either, we ſhall throw all into Confuſion, our Way will be all Miſt and Clouds, that which ſhould be Light, will be Darkneſs, or which is the ſame, a falſe Light, to miſlead us: that which ſhould be our Joy, will be Heavineſs; that which ſhould be our Comfort, and inſpire chearful Hope, will be a dead Weight to burthen our Spirits and clog our Courſe.

Our Path, which ſhould be as the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more, will be a gloomy, melancholy Road, and we ſhall make our

Way with Difficulty, becauſe we want that true Senſe and Knowledge of the Ways and Will of God, which is neceſſary to give Life, Comfort and Vigour.

Frightful Images will terrify our Conſciences, and fill us with groundleſs Fear. God will be deſcribed in a monſtrous Light, and all the raviſhing Glories of his Truth, Wiſdom and Love, which ſhould powerfuly draw our Hearts to him, will be hid from our Eyes.

The Luſtre of redeeming Grace will be eclipſed; ſome Parts of Religion will be ſurperſtitiouſly magnified, while others will be undervalued.

Further, if for Want of due Attention to the Senſe of Scripture we miſtake, or fall into Error, we ought to be ſenſible that religious Error is of a far worſe Nature than any other; not only as it is an Error in a Matter of the greateſt Importance, but as it is of all others the moſt difficult to be corrected; for under the ſacred Name of Religion it ſhelters and defends itſelf, and gains the Character of Truth, of important, neceſſary, awful Truth, and the Unwary think themſelves bound in Conſcience and Duty to maintain it with Zeal; and then whoever endeavours to correct it, though in the Spirit of Meekneſs and Peace, muſt do it at his Peril.

Hence thoſe groſſer Inſtances of Perſecution and Bloodſhed, which have indelibly ſtained the Chriſtian Name. Hence thoſe Wranglings, Debates, Heats and Animoſities, which have deſtroyed Chriſtian Societies.

Theſe Things are the Fruits of Men's taking their religious Principles upon Truſt, and not founding them on the Scriptures ſtudied and underſtood by themſelves. Such Contempt and Neglect of the Word of God expoſeth them to ſtrong Deluſion, and ſuch Deluſion, leads them to fight in the Dark for they know not what.

Thus Religon is corrupted, the Corruption of it defended, and Irreligion, and Infidelity propagated, even by religious People themſelves. So the Sceptic, who is indifferent to any Principles, when he finds Abſurdity, mixed with the Chriſtian Faith, taking the whole for a true Account of Chriſtianity, rejects the whole; for even common Senſe will not allow that Revelation to be Divine, which cannot in many of its Parts be reconciled with the known Perfections of God.

By this unhappy Means, what Numbers in our Land have been drawn into Deiſm! And by this unhappy Means (if the Truth were known) Religion appears but in a doubtful Light to many, who ſeem to be ſtrict Profeſſors of it; for where it is not received in the proper Evidence, there cannot be a full and ſtrong Aſſent of Faith; and no Man can receive it in its proper Evidence, who does not careſully endeavour to underſtand the Scriptures.

Thus many who talk much of the Word of God, and pretend a great Reverence for it, may poſſibly, at the

the laſt Day, be ranked among the Deſpiſers of it; becauſe although they have, perhaps, been much in reading it, they never ſet themſelves in good Earneſt to underſtand it, and ſo in Effect might as well not have read it at all; for their reading it is only from a ſuperſtitious Opinion, as Turks, Jews, and Papiſts turn over the Books in Reputation among them, not from a Love of Truth, or a Deſire of underſtanding Truth; not to open their Eyes, and to give them a more juſt and diſtinct View of the Ways and Diſpenſations of God; not to confirm and eſtabliſh their Minds in the Faith of God, and of Chriſt: Not for thoſe Purpoſes it is much feared are the Scriptures read, but only in a cuſtomary, ſuperſtitious Way, or at leaſt very careleſly and ſuperficially; and therefore there are ſo few Profeſſors of Chriſtianity that grow in Grace, who riſe in ſpiritual Strength, Peace, Love and Joy; becauſe there are ſo few that grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* iii. 18,

Many People preſume they have attained the full Knowledge of Chriſt, who are very ſhort of that which is ſpiritual and ſaving. They have ſomewhere or other fixed the preciſe ſtandard of divine Knowledge, and either more or leſs than that Standard is deemed impious and heretical. How can they ſet themſelves to underſtand the Scriptures, who in another Way, as they think, have already gained the ſame Sum and Body of ſpiritual Underſtanding? See *Romans* xv. 3. *Whatſoever Things were written aforetime, were written for our Learning, for our Inſtruction, that we thro' Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have Hope.* We have hope through that Patience and Comfort which is taught in the Scriptures; but the Grounds and Reaſons of that Patience and Comfort muſt be underſtood; otherwiſe we cannot eſtabliſh in our Minds a ſure and ſolid Hope.

Hence it is that the Chriſtian Hope, that Faith and Hope which overcometh the World, are ſo very rare; therefore ſo few rejoice in Hope, becauſe ſo few underſtand the Scriptures, which are the Ground and Foundation of the true Chriſtian Hope.

Let it be remembered, that we ſhall have the *Benefit* of the Scriptures by ſtudiouſly endeavouring to underſtand them. Then ſhall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.

So far as we underſtand the Word of Truth, we ſhall be truly enlightened, our Conſciences will be rightly directed, and all our Principles well eſtabliſhed; we ſhall ſee its real Value, and it will be proportionably eſteemed; we ſhall taſte its Comforts, feel its Power, be convinced of its divine Original, and it will be both pleaſant and precious to us. The more we underſtand of the Scriptures, with the greater Pleaſure we ſhall ſee the Righteouſneſs, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of all divine Diſpenſations, that all of them are adjuſted and ſettled by the Love of a Father, and calculated to promote our Happineſs. This will draw our Hearts to God, and ſhews us the Propriety of acquieſcing

cing with the Conſtitutions of his Grace.

If we are built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, our Faith will ſtand upon a ſure Bottom, and not upon the weak, precarious Judgment of Man; henceforth we ſhall be no more Children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine. *Eph.* iv. 14, but ſhall by uſe have our Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both Good and Evil. Thus we ſhall grow up into Chriſt in all Things, in Knowledge, in Faith, and in Love. Thus we ſhall be rooted and grounded in Love, in the Love of God, of Truth, and of our Neighbour. The Knowledge we gain, whether it be more or leſs, being drawn from the Fountain, will compoſe our Spirits, and incline us neither to deſpiſe the Weakneſs of thoſe that know leſs, nor to reject the Inſtructions of thoſe that may know more than ourſelves. Theſe weighty Conſiderations ſhould engage us to read the Scriptures, with all poſſible Care and Diligence; and to ſtudy them with an upright Deſire of gaining their true Senſe and Meaning.

We all know how much Men are at Variance concerning the true Senſe and Import of Scripture, one affirming that this, another, that this, is the preciſe Meaning. So it may well be expected to be in our preſent, weak and fallible State of Exiſtence; and ſo indeed God for wiſe and good Reaſons hath permitted it to be, not to give us occaſion to cenſure, judge, and diſparage one another, as is the too general Practice of thoſe who are called Chriſtians; for this is expreſsly forbidden; but this Variety of Sentiments is permitted to teach us to practice Charity towards one another, and ſhould convince us that we ought not to reſign our Underſtanding or Conſciences to any Man's Judgment whatſoever.

Upon the whole, it is evident from the fallible State of human Nature, the Prevalence of human Prejudices, the Defects of human Reaſon, and the proneneſs of Mankind in general to Sin and Iniquity of every kind and Degree; that a certain Method of Direction from the All-wiſe God is abſolutely neceſſary to guide them, into thoſe Paths that lead to the obedience of his Will, and their own trueſt Intereſt and Happinſs; it is alſo as evident, that the ſacred Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament are entirely and fully conducive to thoſe grand important Purpoſes, being as before obſerved, *given by Inſpiration of God, and profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs; that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good Works.*

CHAP. X.

On the Authority and Excellency of the Scripture, as founded on the expreſs and frequent Aſſertions of Moſes, *the* Prophets *and* Apoſtles.

WE have already hinted, that a divine Revelation is perfectly conſonant to the Goodneſs and Love of

of God, to the Relation in which we ſtand to him, and the gracious Purpoſes for which he has given us Being.

We have likewiſe endeavoured to remove ſome Objections againſt Revelation in general, and to prove the Expediency of it from the depraved State of human Nature, and would now beg Leave again to obſerve, that no Books were ever more publicly, or more commonly known, being read and heard with the greateſt Reverence once a Week, in both Jewiſh and Chriſtian Aſſemblies, for a very long Courſe of Time; the Old Teſtament, before the Coming of our Lord, and the Old and New after his Coming, to this very Day. So that it is, in the Nature of Things, impoſſible that the holy Scriptures ſhould be adulterated; nor could any Man, who was diſpoſed to alter or corrupt them, promiſe himſelf Succeſs in an Attempt, which muſt immediately be detected and confounded by thouſands of Copies every where diſperſed, and conſtantly read before numerous Aſſemblies in various Languages of even more Nations than ever compoſed the Roman Empire in its largeſt Extent.

Tranſcribers may indeed make literal Miſtakes, but, thoſe are eaſily corrected by a Variety of Manuſcripts; and Tranſlators may differ in giving the literal Senſe of ſome Words and Phraſes; but not ſo as to render the Subjects and Subſtance of the Scripture, either obſcure or uncertain; for you may take any Tranſlation in any Language, or done by any Party among Chriſtians, and you will find they all agree in the great Doctrines of Salvation, and the ſeveral Laws and Duties injoined by the divine Command; though they may not render the Letter of the Text in the ſame Words, nor with the ſame Propriety of Expreſſion.

The more perfect and exact in every Point any Tranſlation is, the better it is; but it is very certain, that all Things pertaining to the Diſpenſations of God, his Grace and Promiſes, and our Hopes and Duty, have been preſerved pure and entire in every Tranſlation, from the Beginning to this Day; and this is abundantly ſufficient for our Inſtruction, Comfort, Direction, and Edification.

Perſons in foreign Buſineſs, who do not underſtand foreign Languages are obliged to carry it on by the Help of Tranſlators; and if a Letter in *Italian*, *German*, *Spaniſh* or *French*, was put into the Hands of twenty Tranſlators, it is much if every Tranſlation would not differ more or leſs in ſome Expreſſions, and yet they might all agree with reſpect to the Senſe of the Merchant; and this being all his Correſpondent wants to underſtand, he will not think it worth his Pains to enter into Points, or a critical Propriety of Phraſes, which have no Reference to his Buſineſs.

Juſt ſo it is with reſpect to the Tranſlation of the Bible. In more than the Space of an hundred Years, Learning may have received conſiderable Improvements, and by that

Means ſome Inaccuracies may be found in a Tranſlation, more than an hundred Years old; but thoſe who are diſpoſed to believe the Authenticity of Scripture, may reſt fully ſatisfied, that as our *Engliſh* Tranſlation is in itſelf by far the moſt excellent Book in our Language, ſo it is a pure and plentiful Fountain of divine Knowledge, giving a true, clear and full Account of the divine Diſpenſations, and particularly of the Goſpel of our Salvation, inſomuch that whoever ſtudies the ſame, ſtudies the only Way to eternal Happineſs.

Before we proceed to the main Buſineſs of this Chapter, we ſhall endeavour to ſolve a Difficulty that may naturally ſtart upon this Occaſion, it is this, "How comes it to paſs, that "learned Men differ ſo much about "the Senſe of Scripture?"

We anſwer, They differ not ſo much about the litteral Senſe, or Tranſlation of Scripture, as about the Conſtruction which is put upon the literal Senſe.

For Example, All are agreed, that thoſe Word, *Take, eat, this is my Body, which is broken for you*, are rightly tranſlated; but the Queſtion is, What is the Meaning of them? The Papiſt will tell you, they mean, that the Bread in the Lord's Supper, is really turned into the Body, Soul and Divinity of Chriſt. The Proteſtant very juſtly denies the monſtrous and idolatrous Abſurdity, and affirms, That the Bread is only a figurative Expreſſion of Chriſt's ſacrificed Body.

Tranſlators are generally pretty well agreed, but Divines differ much about the Senſe of Scripture, which, by no Means, invalidates the ſame, as to the main End and Drift.

Thus by demonſtrating the reaſonableneſs and Expediency of Revelation in general, by removing Objections that are brought againſt it, and by ſhowing the Sufficiency of the Tranſlation, which, Thanks be to God, is in all our Hands; the Way is prepared for advancing a few Arguments to eſtabliſh the Authority and Excellency of the Scriptures, and to ſhew that they were indeed given by Inſpiration of God, or that, in them, the holy Men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

We have ſufficient reaſon to believe, that we have in our Hands the very Books that were written by *Moſes*, by the Prophets, and by the Apoſtles of Chriſt. Now that thoſe Books were given by Inſpiration of God, or that the Perſons who wrote them have delivered to us what they received from Heaven, will appear from their own expreſs and frequent Aſſertions.

Moſes and the Prophets always declared they ſpake in the Name of the Lord, and delivered to the People what they received in Commiſſion from him.

The Apoſtles likewiſe aſſure us, that they were taught by Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God; were endued with the Spirit of God, and commiſſioned by him to preach the Goſpel to all Nations; and we have the utmoſt Reaſon to believe that they have told

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us the Truth; for if they have not, they must be very wicked, designing Men, who solemnly and publickly rested upon God, Constitutions, Laws, Doctrines, and Declarations, which they knew to be false and fictitious, the Creatures of their own Invention, obtruded upon the World to serve some selfish, sinister Purposes.

But for any thing we can see, they appear to be Persons of the highest Character for Honour and Probity. In the whole of their Conduct we find the utmost Integrity and Disinterestedness, and in every Part of their History and Writings the utmost Simplicity and Impartiality.

We may carry this Argument further, and set it in a still stronger Light in the case of the *Prophets*; for if, when they declared that they spake in the Name of God, and by a Commission from him, they declared a Falshood, and if they knew it were a Falshood, they were not only very wicked, but even void of common sense. It is certain that the Prophets in a long Series one after another, gained no Advantage from speaking in the Name of the Lord; but on the other Hand, that they incurred Scorn and Contempt from the Generality of their Countrymen.

When they entered upon the ungrateful Office, they renounced all worldly Views, and were harrassed and persecuted in proportion to their Fidelity in executing the Commission.

Now, this is too much for any pious Fraud to bear, even in the Case of a single Person, much more in that of a Succession of Men in several Generations. An Impostor like *Mahomet*, may carry his Prentences very high, but he can never bear the Furnace of Persecution. That terrible Scourge will either silence his false and arrogant Claims, or force him to take up Arms, if it is in his Power, for his own Vindication and Security.

But the Prophets were naked Men, who, without the least Dependance upon Worldly Power or Policy, opposed nothing but a divine Commission to very unkind and rigorous Treatment.

Now, there is nothing to be found in human Nature, or in any State of Things that can be supposed to exist, that can possibly account for this Conduct, but either that they really had a divine Commission, or else that they were deprived of their Senses; but their Writings prove they were Men of good Understanding, and of a sound and excellent Judgment; therefore nothing remains, but that they really acted by a divine Commission.

The Force of this Argument will be seen more evidently in the Case of the Apostles. No History in the World had been better preserved than that of the New Testament: there we find that Jesus Christ had gathered, while he was upon Earth, some hundreds of Disciples, who all made Profession of Faith in him, immediately after his Death, declaring that he was risen from the Dead, and ascended into Heaven. Particularly the Apostles, with several others, went about preaching the Gospel, first in

Judea

Judea, then in all Parts of the Roman Empire, perſuading them to believe in Chriſt, affirming that he was the Son of God, that all the wonderful Works related of him were true, and that they had a Commiſſion from Heaven to teach and propagate his Religion every where, though they ſhould every where meet with the moſt violent Oppoſition, and the crueleſt Treatment.

Now they muſt be either fully convinced in their own Minds, that their Aſſertions were true, or if they knew that the Goſpel, and their Commiſſion to preach it, was a Forgery, we muſt conclude they were diſtracted, and had loſt the Uſe of Reaſon and Underſtanding; for admitting our bleſſed Lord never did or ſaid any of theſe Things, which the Apoſtles repeated; and that they had no Inſtruction nor Commiſſion from him to preach the Goſpel; then we muſt ſuppoſe, they entered into a fooliſh and frantic Confederacy after this Manner,

" Men and Brethren, what that " Seducer was, who lived among us " lately, and how juſtly he ſuffered " Death for his vile Impoſture, we, " of all Men living have moſt Rea- " ſon to know; although others, " who were leſs intimately acquaint- " ed with him and his Ways of de- " ceiving, might have ſome Opini- " on of his Worth and Honeſty; yet " we who were the daily Compa- " nions of his Converſation, ſaw no- " thing in him anſwerable to the " Greatneſs of his Pretenſions; but " that his Deſign was, by all the " boldeſt Arts of Craft and Hypo- " criſy, to gain a Name in the " World; and therefore let us enter " into the ſolemn Agreement to pro- " pagate the Belief of this notorious " Cheat among Mankind, and to " feign all Manner of Lies in Con- " firmation of it; to aver that we " ſaw him reſtore Eyes to the Blind, " Ears to the Deaf, and Life to the " Dead; and though it be all falſe, " yet let us confidently report and " aſſert it to the very laſt drop of " our Blood. Further, as after all " his great and glorious Pretences of " being no leſs than the Son of God, " he was at laſt executed as a vile " Malefactor, with every Circum- " ſtance of Shame and Diſhonour, " we muſt fix upon ſome Story to " wipe off this Diſgrace; let us " therefore reſolve to affirm, with " undaunted Steadineſs and the firm- " eſt Reſolution, that after he was " thus diſhonourably crucified, the " third Day he roſe again, often con- " verſed with us, in the ſame fa- " miliar Way, as he had always " done before his Execution; and " that, after a while, we ſaw him " aſcend up into Heaven: But then, " we muſt be ſure to ſtand unaltera- " bly to this bold Falſhood, and per- " ſevere to Death itſelf in the Aſſer- " tion; for what Abſurdity is there " in throwing away our Lives with " no other proſpect than that of final " Perdition? And why ſhould any " Man think it hard to ſuffer Stripes, " Bonds and Impriſonments, Re- " proaches, Diſhonour and Death " itſelf with this View alone?"

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This, or ſome ſuch Thing muſt be the ridiculous Senſe and abſurd Reſolution of the Apoſtles, and firſt Preachers of the Goſpel, upon a Suppoſition that they knew and believed, that the Goſpel and their Commiſſion to preach it was a Forgery.

In this Caſe, a Set of Men in private and abject Life, without any Manner of worldly Power and Intereſt, in the certain Proſpect and Expectation of all Manner of Oppoſition, of ſacrificing all that is dear and valuable in Life, of ſuffering all Manner of Indignities, Tribulations, and Cruelties, and of expoſing themſelves to all the Terrors of Death, muſt agree together to propagate throghout the whole World a Syſtem of Falſhood, knowing it to be ſuch, directly contrary to the Conviction of their own Minds, and to all their Intereſts both in this and a future World.

None but a Company of Madmen, ſeized with the moſt extravagant Phrenzy, and void of all Senſe and Reaſon, could poſſibly unite in ſuch a Deſign. Whereas, if we peruſe their Writings, we ſhall find that the Apoſtles were not only in the full Poſſeſſion of their Reaſon and Underſtanding, but endowed with Knowledge and Wiſdom in a Degree far beyond the moſt eminent Philoſophers, or Maſters of Reaſon, then known in the World.

They had an amazing Knowledge of God, and the Perfections of the divine Nature, they ſet the Diſpenſations of his Wiſdom, and the grand Deſigns of his Love in the cleareſt and moſt amiable Light; they well underſtood the whole Syſtem of the divine Law as a perfect Rule of Practice, and fixed every Branch of it upon a proper Foundation; and upon Principles ſelf evident, or allowed, they have demonſtrated and eſtabliſhed the whole Scheme of the Goſpel.

The Apoſtles were ſo far from being void of common Senſe, that they were in fact Men of the beſt Senſe, of the moſt accurate and ſublime Knowledge, of the moſt excellent and divine Spirit next to their Lord and Maſter, that the World was ever acquainted with; therefore their eſpouſing and aſſerting the Goſpel with ſo much Zeal could not proceed from any Defect in their Underſtanding.

There remains then but one other Cauſe, to which it can poſſibly be aſſigned, which is, that they were amply convinced and fully perſuaded of the Truth of what they reported. If they were fully perſuaded of the Truth of what they reported, then it follows, that what they reported was certainly true.

They were fully ſatisfied that it was true, and they were perfectly capable of receiving the cleareſt Evidence, and fulleſt Satisfaction; for, obſerve, what they reported was not a Matter of mear Opinion, as in the Caſe of Superſtition, nor a warm Suggeſtion, or ſecret Impulſe upon their Minds, as in the Caſe of Enthuſiaſm, but a plain Matter of fact. *We can-*

not, ſay they, *but ſpeak the Things which we have ſeen and heard*, Acts iv. 10.

They were not Things which they conceited or fancied, but which all of them, with great Multitudes of People, had often and openly, for the Space of three or four Years together, ſeen with their Eyes, and heard with their Ears; and that they were not miſtaken or deceived; they were ſo fully ſatisfied, that they ventured all that they had in the World, and even Life itſelf, upon the Truth of what they had heard and ſeen; conſequently their Aſſurance muſt be to the higheſt and fulleſt Degree of Satisfaction, leaving no Room for Doubt or Uncertainty.

However, ſome in the preſent Day may cavil and object, it is certain the Apoſtles, who were the familiar Companions of our bleſſed Lord, had not the leaſt Scruple or Difficulty concerning any thing related in the Goſpel.

They were fully convinced, perfectly aſſured they ſaw *Chriſt* upon Earth, that they converſed with him, that they heard the gracious Words which proceeded from his Mouth, that they ſaw him work Miracles, that they ſaw him crucified and dead, that they ſaw him alive again in a few Days, that they heard him give them a Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel to all Nations, and promiſe them Succeſs; that they actually ſaw him aſcend up to Heaven; that the Holy Ghoſt fell upon them on the Day of Pentecoſt, and that by his Influence, they actually felt themſelves endowed with a new and miraculous Power, which accompanied them, during the Courſe of their Miniſtry; and to their being fully perſuaded of the Truth of theſe Things, and to no other poſſible Cauſe can we aſſign their ſteady and zealous Endeavours to publiſh and ſpread the Goſpel.

Add to all this, that the Apoſtles were amazingly ſucceſsful in preaching the Goſpel, amidſt all the Oppoſition with which they met, during the Courſe of their Miniſtry.

Theſe Men in private and low Life, theſe defenceleſs Men, quite deſtitute of all Worldly Power and Intereſt, only by the Force of Truth, the Truth of the Goſpel, which they preached, and the Power which they received from their Maſter, after he went to Heaven, encountered the Fury of a bigotted and enraged Multitude, and the moſt inveterate Prejudices. All theſe Difficulties they encountered, and ſurmounted them all.

Their Doctrine had a moſt amazing Effect and Influence on the Minds of Multitudes, who by the Power of God, at their Preaching, were daily added to the Church.

Theſe Conſiderations, weighed together in an impartial Ballance, will ſufficiently prove the Authenticity of the Apoſtles Miſſion and Doctrine, that they received their Commiſſion and Inſtruction from *Jeſus* the eternal Son of God; and upon the Foot of this Argument alone, the ſincere Believer may be fully convinced that the Apoſtles were inſpired by the Spirit of God, and that they have in their Writings infallibly delivered the

the Truth, in all Things pertaining to the Chriſtian Faith and Doctrine.

If *Jeſus Chriſt* came from the right Hand of the Father to explain to us the divine Mind and Will; if his Apoſtles were taught by him, and after his Aſcenſion received the Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt in a moſt miraculous Manner, enabling them to perform Wonders in Confirmation of the Doctrine they delivered; it certainly follows, that the Books of *Moſes*, and of the Prophets, are undoubtedly the Word of God; and that the ſacred Hiſtory may be depended on as a true Account of Things: for thoſe Books are not only aſſerted by our Lord, and his Apoſtles, in general, to be the Word of God, given by Inſpiration, and a true Rule of Knowledge, Faith and Doctrine; but particular Paſſages are frequently produced in Proof or Confirmation of the Doctrine they taught, and almoſt every ſingle Part of the Hiſtory, from the Beginning to the End, as of *Adam*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, the *Deluge*, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, *Abraham*, the *Iſraelites*, and their miraculous Deliverance from *Egypt*, and Settlement in the Land of *Canaan*, and all the ſurpriſing Events in their Hiſtory, are referred to as true and authentic.

What Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles have reported and taught in the Books of the Old and New Teſtament, is certainly the Truth, as they received it from God. If ſo, then the Scriptrue of the Old Teſtament are alſo given by Inſpiration, and are a ſacred Repoſitory of divine Knowledge, of undoubted Credit and Veracity; for our Lord and his Apoſtles have repreſented and eſtabliſhed them as ſuch.

Thus the frequent and expreſs Aſſertions of *Moſes*, the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, taken in Connection with their proper Circumſtances, is a Proof of the Truth of Revelation as it ſtands in the Scriptures.

Thus we have endeavoured to deduce the Authority and Excellence of the Scriptures, as contained in the Holy Bible, and comprizing the Books of the Old and New Teſtament, from the expreſs, frequent and concurring Declarations of their reſpective Writers, *viz.* *Moſes*, the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, and would ſubjoin this ſingle Remark for the Comfort and Edification of the pious Chriſtian.

" As you find upon the ſtricteſt Examination, an entire Uniformity of Doctrine, Opinion and Sentiment, concerning the great Things of God in all the ſacred Writings, that they all repreſent the divine Nature in the ſame Light. In ſhort, as they all tend abſolutely to lead us to the Covenant of Grace and the Sufferings and Atoſement of Jeſus Chriſt for Life and Salvation; let us not be wavering in our Opinion, but ſtedfaſtly maintain the Faith once delivered to the Saints, ever remembering that He is faithful, who hath promiſed, and who has declared, that *Heaven and Earth may paſs away, but*

but not one Jot or Tittle of his Word ſhall paſs away."

CHAP. XI.

On the internal Worth and Excellency of the Scriptures, as containing the beſt Principles of Knowledge, Holineſs and Comfort.

THE Arguments we have already advanced, are taken from the external Evidence, that the Scriptures are the Word of God: we now proceed to conſider their internal Worth and Excellency, which more fully and clearly demonſtrates their divine Original, and falls in with the ſecond Part of our Deſign, which was to ſtate the Uſe and Importance of the holy Scriptures.

Conſidering the ſacred Writings as a Gift and Bleſſing from God, the Father of all Light, and Fountain of all Good, for our Improvement in Knowledge and Holineſs, in order to our being advanced to eternal Glory and Happineſs, we may in general conclude, that the Scriptures are in Worth and Uſefulneſs fully proportionable to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Donor, and to the noble and beneficent End for which they are intended. They are a glorious diſplay of heavenly Light, irradiating the Darkneſs of the World, which otherwiſe would have been involved in the blackeſt Night of Ignorance.

Let it be obſerved to the Honour of the Bible, that it is the Book, which under the divine Providence, has preſerved in the World the Knowledge of the only true God, which otherwiſe muſt have been loſt and extinguiſhed; for when God in his infinite Wiſdom was pleaſed to call *Abraham*, and ſeparate his Family to the Purpoſes of Revelation; Idolatry, even in thoſe early Days, not long after the Flood, was ſo far ſpread, that ſome of *Abraham*'s Family were Idolaters, and ſerved other Gods.

So far indeed did the Corruption of Religion prevail, that all Nations, loſing the true Idea of the great and glorious Creator of Heaven and Earth, even JEHOVAH, the only true God, fell into the groſſeſt Idolatry and Superſtition, together with every abominable Vice, except the Nation of the Jews, who enjoyed the Word and Revelation of God; and it was that very Word and Revelation at the Time our Saviour came into the World, which enlightened the Gentiles, and ſo generally reduced them to the Worſhip and Obedience of the great Lord of the Univerſe.

What Knowledge of the living God, what Deteſtation of Idol Worſhip, what Belief of a future State of Rewards and Puniſhment; *Mahomet* has propagated in the World; he received partly from *Jews*, and partly from *Chriſtians*, who had learned thoſe Things from Revelation, though with much Confuſion, and a large Mixture of Fiction and Falſhood. Is any Part of the Chriſtian World ſunk into Superſtition and Idolatry? It is becauſe they have ſhut up the Scriptures, forbidden the free

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Uſe of them, and commanded the People under Pain of Damnation to follow other Guides. Is any Part of the Chriſtian World reformed from the groſs Errors, and monſtrous Corruptions of Popery? It is becauſe they have aſſerted the Authority of the Scriptures, reſumed the Uſe of them, and opened them again to free and common Peruſal.

Nay, farther. Is the Deiſt, or the Man, who in a Chriſtian Land denies or diſparages Revelation, acquainted with the firſt Cauſe, the Fountain of all Being, Power, Life and Happineſs, the univerſal Sovereign? Has he a clear Idea of the Duties which we owe to our Maker, and to one another? It is becauſe he has derived his Light from this reſplendent Sun, which he unnaturally ungratefully, and weakly endeavours to extinguiſh.

Weak indeed are his Endeavours, becauſe this glorious Sun of Goſpel-Light ſhall, by the Providence of God, be preſerved and ſhine with a glorious Luſtre, as long as the Sun in the Firmament.

Under God, the Scriptures muſt be owned, the inſtrumental Cauſe of all the true Religion that is to be found in the World, which for any thing we know, would have been totally loſt among the Nations; and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed more and more; it ſhall ſhine forth more and more; it ſhall be honoured more and more, in the Truth of its Doctrines, in the Wiſdom of its Precepts, in the Accompliſhment of its Predictions and Promiſes, and in the Appearing of our Lord at the laſt Day, to receive into his Joy all that know and obey the Goſpel of his Grace. It ſhall be eſtabliſhed; it ſhall ſhine; it ſhall be honoured, when thoſe, who now deſpiſe and diſparage it, ſhall be confounded for ever.

Thus much may be truly ſaid of the Uſefulneſs of Scripture in general, which gives it infinitely the Preference to all Books of meer human Compoſure, as it has been the Means of preſerving in the World the grand Principles of Religion, the Knowledge of the Being and Perfections of God, and of the true ſpiritual Worſhip, which alone pleaſeth him, and enobles, purifies and comforts our Souls; and juſt in Proportion as the Bible is received, eſteemed and diligently ſtudied, true Religion has prevailed, and will always prevail and flouriſh.

On the other Hand, in proportion as the Scriptures are unknown, neglected, abuſed and perverted; Ignorance, Idolatry, Irreligion, Error, Superſtition and Wickedneſs, have and will ſpread their Gloom, and more or leſs infect Nations and particular Perſons.

The Scriptures contain Principles, which muſt be allowed to be of a ſuperior and excellent Kind. The beſt Principles of Knowledge, Holineſs and Comfort.

In thoſe ſacred Writings we find the beſt Principles of Knowledge. Here the Mind expatiates in a boundleſs Field of Heavenly Light, and clearly views the Proſpects of Truth, where the Eye of meer Nature could never

never have penetrated. Here you ſee the Being of God aſſerted, his Nature and Perfections, his glorious Majeſty and univerſal Sovereignty deſcribed, with the juſteſt Propriety of Sentiment, and the utmoſt Elegance of Language.

There you read, *That the everlaſting God, the Lord and Poſſeſſor of all Wiſdom and Power made the Earth, and created Man upon it; that he ſtretched out the Heavens, and commanded all their Hoſts.*

He meaſured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and the Heavens with a Span. He comprehended the Duſt of the Earth in a Meaſure, and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Ballance. He toucheth the Mountains, and they ſmoke; he looks upon the Earth, and it trembles.

Behold the Nations are as a Drop of the Bucket, and are counted as the ſmall Duſt of the Earth. He takes up the Iſles as a very little Thing. All Nations are before him as nothing; and they are counted to him as leſs than nothing, and Vanity.

The whole Univerſe reſts wholly upon his Arm, and is entirely Subject to the Diſpoſal of his Will. Lift up your Eyes on high, and behold, who has created theſe Things? He calls them by Name, by the Greatneſs of his Might; for, as he is ſtronger in Power, not one of them fails. In Underſtanding he is infinite; he is mighty in Wiſdom, Wonderful in Counſel, and Excellent in Working.

He fills Heaven and Earth, nor can any one hide himſelf in ſecret Places from his all-piercing Eye. The Earth is full of his Glory and Riches; and his Providence is perpetually exerciſed about all and every one of his Creatures.

All Power belongs to him; he can help, and caſt down; he can ſave and deſtroy; and nothing is too hard for the Lord.

God is Love; the Lord is Good, and doth Good; he is Good to all; and his tender Mercies are over all his Works. He is daily loading us with Benefits.

The Righteous he will bleſs; to them he will give Grace and Glory; and even to the wicked, the Lord is plenteous and rich in Mercy. He is a God of Truth, and without Iniquity, juſt and right is he. He is glorious in Holineſs, and of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity.

Now this God, ſo great and glorious, is our God and Maker, our Father, Shepherd and Friend.

This is the Doctrine of Scripture, and a Sentence or two in this holy Book will give you much clearer Conceptions of God, than all the Volumes of Philoſophy, written by Strangers to Revelation. Here you are taught the various Diſpenſations of divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, from the Beginning of the World to this Day, and even to the End of Time.

Here you ſee the excellent Scheme which he has formed for the Inſtruction, Reformation and Happineſs of Mankind; and we read with Pleaſure the numerous Inſtances of his Favours to the Righteous; and with Dread the Terrors of his Vengeance to the wicked.

Here

Here we find a two-fold Covenant; of Works which threatens Death to every Tranſgreſſion; of Grace which grants Pardon and Redemption to every Believer, and promiſes all needful Supplies to the humble and ſincere.

Here we learn how God created a Kingdom among the Nations, or a peculiar Congregation, to prevent the univerſal Corruption of the World, and like a Beacon upon a Hill, to diffuſe the Light of divine Knowledge throughout the Darkneſs of the Earth.

At length we ſee the Meſſiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, appear to take away Sin, to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs, or Salvation, to illuſtrate the Grace of God, and give the plaineſt Explication his Will and Duty, to ſhew the future World in the cleareſt and moſt awful View, and to appoint the moſt powerful Means to attract our Hearts to God, and to guide our Feet into the Way of Peace.

In his Goſpel we ſee the Dead, ſmall and great, reſtored to Life, appearing before his Judgment Seat, to receive a Sentence according to what they have done in the Body. There he has opened the Glories of Heaven to our Sight, and ſhewn to our Faith the far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, the aſſured Conſequence of a patient Continuance in well-doing; he has alſo uncovered the bottomleſs Pit, the Blackneſs of Darkneſs for ever, which will be the terrible Portion of all impenitent Workers of Iniquity.

In the Scriptures the State of the Church to the End of the World is deſcribed, and we ſee the preſent State of Things correſpondent with prophetic Deſcriptions.

It would exceed the Bounds of our preſent Deſign to mention the ſeveral Heads of Inſtruction and Knowledge with which the Word of God abounds; we ſhall therefore obſerve but one more, and that is, the Deſign of our preſent Exiſtence in this World, which is there repreſented in a Manner agreeable to the Appearance of Things, and the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, not to be for Enjoyment, but for Trial, not to gain temporal Pleaſures or Poſſeſſions, but to diſcipline our Souls, and to prepare them for immortal Glory and Honour.

In particular, the many Afflictons incident to our Frailty, are ſet in a true and encouraging Light, as the Diſcipline and Correction of our heavenly Father; not for our Deſtruction, but for our Improvement in Holineſs, to purify our Spirits from Senſuality, to draw our Regard to Things heavenly and eternal, to exerciſe our Faith, Hope, Patience, and every Virtue which is our real Excellency, and beſt Qualification for everlaſting Happineſs.

This is a brief and very imperfect Specimen of Scripture Doctrine, which, even in this curſory View, aſſiſted by a little ſerious Reflection, muſt, to an impartial Judgment, moderately acquainted with what the wiſeſt of Pagans have taught, appear infinitely ſuperior to the Darkneſs and Un-

Uncertainty of meer human Knowledge and Wiſdom.

In the Scriptures you will find the beſt Principles of Holineſs, or of that State of Mind, whereby we are habitually devoted to God and Truth. For there we are ſhewn the Nature and Deſign of Being, in a Manner greatly ſuperior to what we could have deſired from our own Reaſon and Reflection.

There we read, that we are made in the Image of God, inſpired with Underſtanding, raiſed vaſtly in our Faculties, above the reſt of the Creation, and made for Ends, proportionably grand and noble; not for the mean Purpoſes of Time and Senſe, but for God; for his Honour and Favour, to ſhew forth his Praiſe, and for ever enjoy his Goodneſs. Every Obligation reſulting from this important Conſideration, even the gracious and excellent Purpoſes of our Being, is with the greateſt Propriety and Force urged upon us.

In every Page of the holy Scriptures, the Love of God ſmiles upon us with an attractive and endearing Aſpect, to draw our Affections to him, and to give a Conſtancy and Steadineſs to our Obedience in the Midſt of ſo many, and ſo ſtrong Temptations, when we know the Neceſſity of Trials, Troubles and Affliction of every Kind, in this Vale of Tears, in order to prepare us for a Reſidence in the heavenly Manſions, where Sorrow ſhall be no more, where all Tears ſhall be wiped from our Eyes, and endleſs Ages ſhall be ſpent in the uninterrupted Fruition of ſuch Bleſſings, as Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive.

In the Scripture we have the divine Diſpleaſure againſt all Unrighteouſneſs and Ungodlineſs of Men, ſet upon its true Foundation; the odious and pernicious Nature of Sin, which is in itſelf falſe and miſchievous, the only radical Evil in the Univerſe, and that which alone can deprive us of Happineſs, and ſubject us to Miſery.

In the Word of God, his Favour to pious Perſons is alſo ſet upon its proper Foundation; the amiable and excellent Nature of true Holineſs, which in itſelf is true and ſalutary, the greateſt Preparative for future Glory, is repreſented in the moſt lively and engageing Colours.

Here we are kindly encouraged by the divine Grace, to think of our Ways, and by true Repentance, to turn from whatever is repugnant to the Obedience of God.

Here we are directed frequently to examine our Hearts, to baniſh thence every corrupt Principle, and to keep the Spring of Action within us, pure from any diſorderly Thought and Inclination; to guard our Spirits with a watchful Eye, from every impure Motion and Suggeſtion; to be vigilant againſt every Temptation and Aſſault of the grand Enemy of Souls, that we may keep ourſelves undefiled in the good Ways of God.

Here we are inſtructed in the moſt perfect and reaſonable Sobriety, Temderaner and Self-denial, and warned perance of

of the Danger of every ſenſual Snare and Allurement.

Here this periſhing Body, with whatever can delight and adorn it; here this preſent World, with whatever in it that can engage our Affections and Eſteem, are fully expoſed to the Judgment and Cenſure of Reaſon, and manifeſtly ſhewn to be Emptineſs and Vanity, infinitely below the Excellence and Worth of immortal Spirits; and therefore unfit to be purſued at the Expence of our preſent Integrity, or future Felicity.

In the ſacred Writings we find a rich Magazine of all proper Means for the Sanctification of our Souls, and our moſt ſucceſsful Advances in the Life of God.

Here we ſee that the divine Power and Spirit are ready by mighty Aids to aſſiſt, enlighten and ſtrengthen our Spirits, and incline our Hearts towards God's Commandments: here we are directed every Day, and at all Times to ſeek unto God, by ſervent Prayer, for his Guidance and Protection; and are graciouſly aſſured that we ſhall not ſeek his Face in vain.

In the Holy Scriptures we are taught the Ordinances of Religion, both public and private, in the conſcientious Uſe of which we ſhall grow into perfect Men in *Chriſt Jeſus*; particularly we are commanded to ſet apart a competent Portion of our Time every Day, and to keep the Sabbath holy every Week; that by ſerious Meditation upon God's Word, and by pouring out our Hearts before him in Prayer and Thankſgiving, we may renew our ſpiritual Strength; be more and more confirmed in the Habits of Holineſs, and find our ſelves ſtill advancing nearer to heavenly Perfection.

This Sketch of the Principles of Holineſs, to be derived from the Scriptures, clearly proves their divine Original and Excellence, as it ſets them vaſtly above any Thing human Wiſdom can diſcover or deviſe.

In the Scriptures we alſo find the beſt Principles of Comfort and Refreſhment to the Soul. How needful are ſuch Principles in a Scene of Afflictions, Sin and Weakneſs! In general, under how many amiable Characters; under how many ſweet Encouragements we are invited to truſt in the Almighty and eternal God; to look unto him, and make his Name, his Goodneſs and Power, our Refuge in every Want, Danger, Difficulty and Conflict? Being aſſured that he careth for us while we hope in him; and that He will never leave us nor forſake us! We are encouraged to hold out unto the End; perſuaded, that however He may permit our Sufferings and Griefs, He can never forget us, and will make all Things, how bitter ſoever, work together for our Good, we are diſpoſed to glorify God amidſt all the Diſpenſations of his wiſe Providence.

Heaven is at all Times open to our Complaints and Supplications; and the Throne of God, which is a Throne of Grace, is eaſy of Acceſs, to the Breathings and Deſires of the penitent, believing Soul.

Are we loaded with a Senſe of Guilt? See the Blood of *Jeſus!* the Security and Seal of our Pardon. Are we humbled under a Senſe of our Unworthineſs? Hear the Voice of divine Grace, proclaiming us the Children of God; a Dignity far ſuperior to all the Honours of this vain and tranſitory State.

Look into the Scriptures; view the unſearchable Riches of Chriſt! Behold the Love of our God and Redeemer! of his own gracious Will, and meer good Pleaſure, he has begotten us; he is become our Father; he has *juſtified us freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus*; he has conferred upon us the Honour of his Children; he has made us welcome to all the Bleſſings of his Covenant, and to all the Glories of his Kingdom.

Fearful and dejected Soul! Look into the glorious Goſpel, and ſee thy God ſhining in all the Beams of free and heavenly Grace. Be of good Comfort; thy Sins are forgiven; thy Intereſt in the Covenant is ſure; the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is thy God and Father; and thou art welcome to all the Treaſures of his Mercy and Goodneſs. Only rejoice in his Grace and live agreeably to it in all Faith, Purity, Love and Goodneſs.

Are you afraid your own Weakneſs and ſurrounding Temptations ſhould draw your Regard from God, pervert your Mind, and cauſe you to fall ſhort of Salvation? Fear not thou Worm *Jacob*; for I am with thee; be not diſmayed; for I am thy God; *I will ſtrengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right Hand of my Righteouſneſs*, or Salvation.

Only cleave unto God by Faith in Chriſt, with Purpoſe of Heart; and He who has begun a good Work, will certainly perfect it unto the Day of Chriſt. You ſhall be more than Conquerors through him that hath loved us.

Doth the World frown, and pour its Sorrows into your Breaſt? Look to the heavenly World, the Glory that ſhall be revealed in the Saints. That is your Home and Country; that is your Portion and Inheritance; and if you regard it as ſuch, you will rejoice in the Hope of the Glory of God, and be raiſed far above the Cares and Fears of this low and tranſitory State.

Such ſtrong Conſolations the holy Scriptures ſupply, and therefore their Author is undoubtedly the God of all Conſolations; for no Wiſdom of Man could ever poſſibly have opened to us ſuch a Fountain of Joy, Comfort and Refreſhment.

Thus we ſee the Scriptures contain, beyond all Diſpute, the beſt Principles of Knowledge, of Holineſs and Comfort.

It is no leſs evident that they deliver the beſt Precepts for directing all our Actions, which may be reduced to three Heads; our Duty to God, to our Neighbour, and to our ſelves.

We are taught to worſhip God with a ſincere Admiration of his Glory and Perfections, with profound Reverence of his Greatneſs, with hum-

humble Adoration of his Sovereignty, with the higheſt Love and Eſteem for his Excellency and Amiableneſs, with Joy and Gratitude for his Goodneſs, and with a Heart truly devoted to his Honour, and determined for his Obedience.

To our Neighbour, we are directed to perform not only Juſtice, Truth and Equity, but alſo unfeigned Charity, the moſt extenſive Kindneſs and Benevolence.

To our ſelves, we owe Self-preſervation and Self-government; and the Scriptures admoniſh us to take the wiſeſt Care of our Being, by cultivating and guarding our Minds, and by mortifying all inordinate Affections and Paſſions.

In ſhort, all that our Reaſon can find in the Law or Religion of Nature, is without the leaſt Omiſſion, tranſcribed into Revelation, and moreover, the Wiſdom of God has not only perfected and ſupplied our Deficiences, but hath diſcovered to us the Riches of Goodneſs, Knowledge and Power, infinitely beyond what our natural Faculties could ever have attained.

Thus we are furniſhed both with the moſt perfect Rules of Obedience, and alſo with the moſt powerful Motives to the Obſervance of them.

Thus, as already obſerved, it is further evident, that the ſacred Writings of the Old and New Teſtament, are a Storehouſe of the moſt ſacred and uſeful Knowledge, admirably adapted to the Improvement of our Minds in Faith and Holineſs, beyond all Competition and Objection.

But as thoſe only can object againſt them, who never read them, or never with ſerious Minds; if you would know what the Scriptures are, if you would know whether they are of God, read them, ſtudy them, meditate upon them, and you cannot fail of being convinced of their Excellency and divine Original.

Such being the intrinſic Excellency of the Scriptures, it has entered into our Lord's Thoughts, and was the object of his Care in his laſt Moments, even amidſt the Pains and Agonies of Death. Its being the Subject of his Thoughts at a Time, when his Thoughts turned upon nothing but what were infinitely momentous; his being concerned upon the Croſs, that no Point of Scripture ſhould want its full Evidence or Eſtabliſhment, is a Demonſtration of the great Worth and ſuperior Excellency of Scripture.

Under all his preceding Sufferings, which muſt be exceedingly bitter, he never dropped the leaſt Expreſſion of the Sorrow and Anguiſh he felt, but endured it with Silence of the moſt perfect Meekneſs and Patience.

We muſt therefore conclude, he would not have opened his Mouth to ſignify his grievous Diſtreſs, when on the Croſs, [*My God! My God! Why haſt thou forſaken me!*] had it not been for the Sake of expreſſing his Truſt in God; nor would he have mentioned his Thirſt, but from a Regard to divine Revelation, and its Accompliſhment.

Our Lord has all along, from firſt to

to laſt, ſhewn the higheſt Reſpect to the Word of God. With this Sword did he combat and conquer Satan, when tempted by him in the Wilderneſs.

He always, in the Courſe of his Miniſtry, appeals to it as the Standard of religious Truth, revealing the Will of God, and explaining his Diſpenſations. He declares he came not deſtroy ſo much as one Tittle of the Law or the Prophets, but to complete, vindicate, or illuſtrate them; aſſuring us, that their Original was Divine, their Honour ſhall be perpetual, and that, *till Heaven and Earth paſs away*, and the whole Frame of Nature be diſolved, *not one Jot ſhall paſs*, or periſh from the Law or Revelation, *till all be fulfilled.*

Our bleſſed Lord directs the Jews to ſearch the Scriptures, as the Doctrines of eternal Life were contained in them, and as they teſtified of him.

As his Sufferings drew nearer, he frequently takes Notice of the Fulfilment of the Scriptures in the ſeveral Steps and Events which led to them. *Matt.* xxvi. 34. *All ye ſhall be offended becauſe of me this Night; for it is written, I will ſmite the Shepherd, and the Sheep of the Flock ſhall be ſcattered abroad*; and again, in the 53d and 54th Verſes of the ſame Chapter, *Thinkeſt thou that I cannot now pray my Father, and he ſhall preſently give me more than twelve Legions of Angels. But how then ſhall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it muſt be?*

Thus we find, that the Scripture might be fulfilled in his Sufferings, he would not ſuffer his Diſciples to reſcue him out of the Hands of thoſe who came to ſeize him.

When upon the Croſs, he is not diverted from the ſame important Purpoſe, though in the midſt of the moſt exquiſite Torments, and labouring under a violent Drought.

Regard to the Scripture prevailed in his Mind, more than the Senſe of the greateſt Pain and Anguiſh; and not relieve his thirſt, *but that the Scripture might be fulfilled*, he cried out, *I thirſt.*

Thus our crucified Lord has ſet the Seal of his Blood to the divine Authority, Excellency and Certainty of the holy Scriptures. He came into the World; he laid down his Life to accompliſh what was fore-ordained, and foretold in the Scriptures.

Now this evidently implies, that our Lord knew, and was perſuaded, that the Scriptures are of divine Original, are the Word of God, and to declare to us the Mind and Will of God; conſequently they contain Diſcoveries and Inſtructions of the higheſt and moſt excellent Nature; and that all Things they predict, muſt, and moſt certainly will, be accompliſhed.

It ſeems at firſt View but an inconſiderable Circumſtance, that the Scriptures intimate, they would give the *Meſſiah*, in his Thirſt, Vinegar to drink. This ſeems to be a Fact of no great Moment; nor do we know that it ſtood in Connection with any thing of Conſequence, and yet our Lord would not overlook it; he took

took Care ſhould be punctually fulfilled.

How much more then may we perſuade ourſelves, that the great Promiſes, and all the Predictions relating to Matters of vaſt Importance, ſhall be accompliſhed?

The apparent Inſignificancy of Vinegar, being offered to Chriſt on the Croſs, adds great Force to the Argument. If a Point, ſeemingly ſo minute, was carefully attended to, and punctually diſcharged, when the Redeemer was in Extremity of Pain and Torture, how much more, now that he is entered into his Joy; now that he is poſſeſſed of the higheſt Felicity and Glory; now that he is inveſted with the moſt extenſive Power and Dominion? How much more will he now make Good all that is declared by the ancient Prophets in the Old Teſtament; and all that he himſelf hath foretold and promiſed in the New, relating to the Things of infinite Moment? Exceeding great and precious Promiſes are given us of the Divine Preſence, Bleſſing and Protection, thro' this World, which every upright Man may be aſſured will be made Good.

How many glorious Predictions have our Lord and his Apoſtles delivered concerning the World that is to come?—*that he will raiſe us up again at the laſt Day*; and we ſhall certainly be raiſed out of our Graves, and reſtored to a Life quite different from the preſent—*that he will come in great Glory to judge the World*; and moſt aſſuredly He will ſo come, and we ſhall every one of us ſtand before his Tribunal, to give an Account of ourſelves.

To his faithful Servants he hath *promiſed eternal Life*; and to all ſuch, without Failure, he will give eternal Life.

It is frequently foretold, that *everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord*, will be the dreadful Lot of the impenitently wicked; and doubtleſs everlaſting Deſtruction will be the Lot of ſuch.

Moſt clearly hath he made known his everlaſting Kingdom of Glory, where his ſincere Followers ſhall partake of his Glory and Felicity, and we may firmly believe and hope, that this will be our happy Condition, if we make it our preſent Care to be his ſincere Followers.

Thus has our beneficent Redeemer afforded us in his laſt Moments, a moſt ſolid Ground of Hope towards God, and directed us abſolutely to depend upon all that the Scriptures reveal concerning our Salvation.

But let us conſider the Stile and Manner of the ſacred Writings, from which may likewiſe be derived another Argument in Proof of their divine Authority. There is a peculiar Majeſty as well as genuine Simplicity diſcernable in the Productions of the inſpired Penmen, nay, ſo impartial are they, that they hide not their own Failings nor thoſe of any concerning whom they write: Thus *Moſes* recorded not only *Noah*'s Drunkenneſs, and *Lot*'s Inceſt, but his own raſh Anger and Unbelief; thus *David* regiſtered in the 51ſt Pſalm, his own Murder and Adultery: *Jeremiah*

remiah relates his own unbecoming Fears, Diſcontent and Murmurings, *Jer.* xx. 7, 8.

The Writers of the New Teſtament conceal not the Infirmities and Defects, nor even the groſs Miſcarriages of themſelves and their Brethren; as their puſillanimous Deſertion of their bleſſed Lord and Maſter at his Paſſion; the Unbelief of Thomas, the Ambition of *John* and *James* the Son of *Zebedee*, and *Peter*'s Denial of Chriſt, a Crime greatly aggravated by Perjury.

From the free, open, and circumſtantial Manner, in which the Scriptures treat on their different Subjects, it is evident they are not the Writings of Men, and clear beyond a Demonſtration, that no worldly and ſiniſter Deſign is carried on in them, but that their ſole End and View are the Glory of God and the Salvation of Mankind; in ſhort the Impartiality and Sincerity of the ſacred Penmen is an irrefragable Argument of the Truth of their Writings.

The Majeſty and Simplicity which run through the Scriptures call likewiſe for our Attention and Regard. An ancient Father thus ſpeaks of the Stile and Subjects of the Bible, *The Language of divine Wiſdom in the Scriptures is plain, but the Senſe is ſublime and heavenly, whereas on the contrary, the Language of Heathen Writers is lofty and Bombaſt, but the Subjects mean and unintelligible.* The great *Boyle*, treating on this Subject, declares, *that it fits not the Majeſty of God, whoſe Book this is* [*meaning the Bible*] *to obſerve the human Laws of Method, and Niceneſs of Art; inſpired Writings muſt not be like thoſe of Men.* Their ſingular Grace is, that they are not artificial and ſtudied; but ſimple, plain, and eaſy, as an artificial Method is below the Majeſty of the Spirit that dictated them, and would greatly detract from their intrinſic Worth and Merit.

The oftener we look into the ſacred Volume, the more we ſhall be convinced that the Pens of the Writers were wholly guided and directed by a divine Hand; for on a minute Obſervation of any of the Books either doctrinal or hiſtorical, it will appear that the Mode of Expreſſion is in a great Meaſure peculiar to itſelf.

To theſe Remarks may be added, that it is the firm Belief and Opinion of many learned and pious Men, that the very Words and Phraſes of Scripture were dictated by the divine Spirit; and under the particular Guidance and Direction of the Holy Ghoſt.

But there are ſome Divines of a contrary Opinion, who poſitively aſſert, That the Stile and Language of Scripture were not dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, but the Matter only. Among other Arguments to prove, that the words were not dictated by the Spirit, they argue, That Chriſt and his Apoſtles quote Places from the Old Teſtament, as they are tranſlated in the *Septuagint*; and infer from thence, that as they would have cited the Paſſages in the Original Phraſes, if theſe had been from divine Inſpiration, it is evident they are not ſo, be-

becauſe the Apoſtles uſe Words and Terms very different from thoſe in the *Hebrew*.

In anſwer to this we beg Leave to obſerve, That though the Apoſtles thought fit to make Uſe of the *Septuagint* Verſion, which is but a Paraphraſe in many Places on the original Text; yet it by no Means follows from hence, that the very Words of the Original were not dictated by the Holy Ghoſt.

Neither our bleſſed Lord, nor the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles do hereby declare, that the *Hebrew* Text was not inſpired, and that even as to the Phraſe and Words: all therefore that we can gather from their uſing the *Greek* Tranſlation is, that they found it convenient at that Time (for Reaſons which will be aſſigned hereafter) to quote ſome Places as they are rendered by thoſe Tranſlators, and not exactly according to the Original.

But all this doth not neceſſarily imply, much leſs prove, that the Penmen of the Old Teſtament were not aſſiſted by the Spirit in the very Words which they uſed.

The contrary Opinion is grounded on a very good Reaſon; for the ſacred Writings, being of a more excellent Nature, than all others in the World, it was meet that they ſhould be characterized by the peculiarity of their Stile.

Thoſe who will not grant this, acknowledge that their Writings, in one Reſpect at leaſt, and that no inconſiderable one, are no better than the Writings of other Men, which cannot but be deemed a great Diſparagement of the holy Bible.

Chriſt promiſed his Diſciples, that when they ſhould be brought before Governors and Kings for his Sake, *it ſhould be given them, what they ſhould ſpeak; for* (as he adds) *it is not they that ſpeak, but the Spirit of their Father that ſpeaketh in them*, Matt. x. 19, 20. And is it not moſt reaſonable to think, that the ſame Spirit taught the Writers of the Old and New Teſtament, *what they ſhould ſpeak*, and commit to Writing, and furniſhed *them* with Words to that Purpoſe?

The Propriety of this Opinion will appear, if it is conſidered, that this was a Book intended to laſt throughout all generations in the Church; deſigned for the Uſe of the faithful, and for the Confutation of their Adverſaries to the End of the World; and that being to be produced upon all Occaſions, it was neceſſary that it ſhould be of an extraordinary Compoſition; and that every Word ſhould be expreſly from the Direction of the Holy Spirit of God.

St. Peter aſſures us, That the Writers of the Old Teſtament *ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, 1. Pet. i. 21. Their ſpeaking, and conſequently their Writing (becauſe they muſt neceſſarily correſpond) was by the ſpecial Influence of the infallible Spirit; therefore their very Words were dictated and directed by the ſame Spirit.

The great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* de-

declares indefinitively and abſolutely, without the leaſt Degree of Reſtriction that *all Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God:* Now if all Scripture be by divine Inſpiration; it follows that the very Words of it are, for the Words are certainly an eſſential Part and Branch of it; therefore if we grant that the Whole is by Inſpiration, we muſt neceſſarily grant likewiſe, that the Parts of it are, for the Parts conſtitute the Whole.

Hence we may be exempted from Preſumption, in aſſerting, that every Word in the ſacred Scripture is indited by the Spirit of God, and that there is nothing wanting, nothing ſuperfluous in their Stile and Phraſeology.

But further, that the Whole of our Deſign in treating upon this Subject may be underſtood, we obſerve, that by what has already been ſaid, we would not intimate, that the ſacred Penmen were ſo tied up by the Spirit, that they could not, or did not uſe their own natural Underſtanding, or acquired Knowledge.

Though the Words be dictated by the Spirit, the Penmen might write according to the Improvements they had made in Speech. We do not by what we have ſaid, exclude the peculiar Elegance and Strain of the Writers, or their availing themſelves of the Advantages of their Education, or their conforming to the Dialect of their Country.

Iſaiah, being a Courtier, and a Perſon of Rank, has a neat and elegant Stile, but yet varies the Phraſe according to the Subject; but in the general he is lofty and elegant, his Stile being raiſed by his Education, which was ſuitable to his noble Extraction, for he was of the Blood Royal.

Jeremiah and *Amos*, being uſed to the Country, are plain and homely in their Language; the latter eſpecially diſcovers his Condition and Rank in Life in his ſimple, rural Strain.

In like Manner in the New Teſtament, St. *Luke*, who had improved himſelf by Art and Study, is very particular in preſerving the *Greek* Elegance, and avoiding all improper and exotic Terms, both in the Goſpel and his Hiſtory of the Acts of the Apoſtles.

Indeed the Stile of the ſacred Penmen is very different, and this Difference is an Excellency in this Book of God; and upon the whole we conclude, that the Stile, Words, and Compoſition of the ſacred Writings, are ſuch as ought to be reckoned divine; for the Bible has this Peculiarity, above all other Books, that every Thing appertaining to it is Divine.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

On the external Teſtimony of the Scriptures, as founded on Tradition, and the Confirmation of Enemies and Strangers, with Anſwers to divers Objections.

WE have already taken Notice of the Teſtimony given by God to the ſacred Scriptures, in the wonderful Preſervation of them thro' all Ages, ſince they were firſt written.

We have likewiſe obſerved, the marvellous Succeſs which attended the Doctrines contained in theſe Writings, which have prevailed againſt the Power of Men and Devils, and to this very Day are maintained and upheld, notwithſtanding the Attempts of both to root them out of the World; external Teſtimony ſhall therefore be the Subject of our preſent Enquiry.

By *external Teſtimony* we mean no other than this; that Scripture is atteſted by univerſal Tradition; and this Tradition is both of Jews and Chriſtians. From the joint Atteſtations of theſe Witneſſes, we ſhall endeavour to render it evident, that theſe Books, which we now have, are the true Copies of the Originals; that the ſame Books and Authors are faithfully delivered down to us, which were firſt of all delivered to the Jews, and to the primitive Chriſtians; and that there is nothing in theſe Writings, as we now have them, that is falſified or corrupted.

With reſpect to the Books of the Old Teſtament, we are acquainted by the ancient Church of the Jews, whoſe Teſtimony is very authentic, that theſe were the only Writings that were univerſally agreed by them to be extraordinarily inſpired. And they further inform us, that theſe Books which were written by different Perſons, were firſt compiled and collected into one Body, or Volume, by *Ezra*, and the Aſſemblies of Doctors, convened for that Purpoſe, and conſequently that the Canon of ſacred Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament (as it is at this Time) was not conſtituted till *Ezra*'s Days by the *Great Synagogue*.

Upon his Return from the Babyloniſh Captivity, he undertook this good Work; he gathered together all thoſe diſperſed Books, which having reviewed, he publicly owned, and ſolemnly vouched the Authority of every one of them, that the Church for the future might not doubt of their being authentic and true.

After he had cauſed the Books to be fairly tranſcribed, he arranged them in that Order in which they are now placed; ſo that he may be deemed the Compoſer of the Old Teſtament into the Model in which we now behold it.

Moſt of the learned Jews aſſert, that from his reviſing the Books aroſe what they call the *Keri* and the *Chetib*; that is, where the Copies diſagreed, or where two Readings were probable, they were made *Variæ Lectiones*, or various Readings,

the one was put into the Margin, and called *Keri*, the other into the Text, and called *Chetib*.

This was one Way to keep the Bible entire and uncorrupted; and by the Favour of divine Providence, it has been tranſlated ſo to us; ſo that we may from hence be aſſured that we have in our Hands the ſame *Hebrew* Text, which was at firſt given by God to his People.

But ſome have averred, that the old Teſtament was burnt at the ſame Time that the Temple was; and that *Ezra*, after the Captivity, dictated and wrote it over again; that though there was ſome Recovery of the Law, yet the original Book being loſt, it cannot but be imagined there are many Errors in that which we have at preſent.

To this we anſwer: Either the Paſſage in 2 *Eſdras* xiv. 21, 23, 24, on which that Affirmation is grounded, ſpeaks of ſome other Book diſtinct from that of the *Moſaic* Law, or it is to be reckoned as fabulous and ſuppoſititious; and ſo no Credit is to be given to it: for in *Nehemiah* vii. 2, 3. there is Mention of *the Book of the Law* being *brought before the Congregation*, and its being *read before the Men and Women*; but not a Syllable of the Circumſtance mentioned in *Eſdras* is here to be found. Nay, it is implied, that the Book of the Law was ſtill the ſame; for there is a particular Account of what the *Chaldeans* deſtroyed and burnt, and carried away, at the taking of *Jeruſalem*; but there is not a Word relative to theſe holy Books, which would moſt certainly have been taken Notice of, being of ſuch ineſtimable Value.

Moreover, if we ſhould ſuppoſe the Law was burnt in the Temple, yet there were many Copies of it among the Jews, which without doubt were preſerved; we have no Reaſon therefore to ſuſpect that the *Hebrew* Original of the Old Teſtament is corrupted.

Some indeed of the ancient Fathers, as well as ſome learned Men of later Date, have aſſerted, that the *Hebrew* is corrupted; but *Jerom* and *Auguſtine* removed that Suſpicion, by declaring that the Jews had never adulterated the *Hebrew* Text, and praiſing them for their Faithfulneſs in preſerving the Bible pure and uncorrupt.

As to ſome of the Moderns, who have aſſerted that the *Hebrew* Copies are erroneous, their Motives are very eaſily diſcernable. The *Romans* affirm the *Hebrew* Text is corrupted, and alſo that of the *Septuagint*: ſeveral of that Faith have written againſt the Purity of the *Hebrew* Copies, and laboured to prove them corrupt.

One (*Morinus*) hath ſhewn himſelf more zealous than the reſt in this Point, and he frankly confeſſeth, that his main Deſign in it was, to baffle the Proteſtants, who make the Scriptures the Rule of their Faith and Manners. He reaſons in this Manner; If the Originals of the Bible be loſt, and the Tranſcripts defective and erroneous, how can the Bible be a certain Rule? What will be-

come then of the Religion of the Proteſtants, who found it ſolely on Scripture? This being uncertain, that of Conſequence muſt be the ſame: wherefore the beſt and only Way is, to have recourſe to Tradition, and to the Church: theſe are the only Rules by which we are to regulate our Faith and Practice.

This is evidently the Aim and and Deſign of the Romiſh Writers, who endeavour to invalidate the Hebrew Text, but moſt of the learned of that Church have not proſecuted this Method, as it is well known they have generally held the Hebrew Text to be uncorrupted; and the ſame is defended by the greateſt Part of learned Proteſtants, who have treated on this Subject.

Voſſius is the only Writer of Eminence, who aſſerts that the Hebrew Bible, as it now is, is corrupted by the Jews. But in Reply to him and all others, ancient or modern, who maintain this Opinion, we offer the following Conſiderations.

If the Jews corrupted the Hebrew Text, they did either *before*, or *after* the Time of Chriſt; that they did it not *before*, is evident, becauſe our bleſſed Lord never mentions any ſuch Corruption, which he certainly would not have omitted, at ſuch Times as he reproved the Scribes and Phariſees for their known Faults and Offences, eſpecially thoſe which related to the Law; as for Inſtance, when he charged them with *making the Law of God of none Effect by their Traditions*. Certainly he would have rebuked them for ſo groſs a Fault, when he corrected them for ſome, which were leſs atrocious and pernicious in their Nature and Tendency. Nay, the Jews are not only reproved for corrupting the Canon of Scripture, but on the contrary their Care and Faithfulneſs in preſerving it whole and entire are particularly mentioned. *Luke* iv. 16, 17. *Acts* xiii. 27, and xv. 21. and commended, *Rom.* iii. 2. Beſides, Chriſt ſends his Auditors to the Old Teſtament to read it, and *ſearch* it, *John* v. 39. Whereas if they had corrupted it, he would beyond all doubt, have cautioned them againſt it.

Further, Chriſt and his Apoſtles conſtantly proved their Doctrine, and confuted the Jews out of thoſe very Writings; which is an infallible Argument, that in the time of our Saviour thoſe Books were not corrupted; otherwiſe he and the Apoſtles would not have ſo frequently quoted them, and uſed the Teſtimony of almoſt every particular Book as authentic, and of divine Inſpiration.

That the Hebrew Text was not corrupted *after* the Time of our Saviour is manifeſt, becauſe the Teſtimonies cited out of the Old Teſtament, by thoſe that ſucceeded Chriſt and his Apoſtles, are found to the ſame in thoſe writings now, without the leaſt Variation.

Nor can it be ſhewed at what time after Chriſt, the Alteration or Corruption of the Text began; though ſome have preſumptuouſly affirmed, it was preſently after the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, which has not yet been proved.

Farther, if we obſerve thoſe Paſ-

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ſages in the *Hebrew* Text, which ſome alledge are corrupted by the Jews, we ſhall find their was no Ground, Cauſe, or Occaſion for any ſuch Corruption. If they changed the Text, it was doubtleſs for their own Ends, and to maintain ſome Error, which they had broached; in this Caſe, the Alteration would have been in thoſe Places eſpecially which ſpeak of *Chriſt* the true *Meſſiah*, but we cannot diſcover any ſuch Alteration.

Amongſt the many Texts which are ſaid to be changed and corrupted, their is ſcarcely one to be found, that relates to the Sufferings and death of the bleſſed Jeſus; whence we may conclude that the Old Teſtament remains altogether unaltered and uncorrupted.

We might on this Occaſion again obſerve, that there were Multitudes of Copies diſperſed every where, both before and after the Time of our Saviour, ſo that it was impoſſible to corrupt them all. Upon the whole then we conclude, that the Bible is pure and uncorrupt, and after all the Diſputes about the various Readings, it is undeniable, that there is no Difference in the Hebrew Copies, as to any Thing conſiderable and of Moment; it affects not any neceſſary Point of Religion, which we are bound to believe or practiſe.

In the ſeveral Copies, the ſame Hiſtorical Facts are related, the ſame Miracles recorded, the ſame Prophecies and Predictions enumerated, the ſame Doctrines and Precepts inculcated, and that without any Variation. So that we are certain of the Validity of the *Hebrew* Bible; and notwithſtanding what has been ſuggeſted to the contrary, we are aſſur'd that we have the authentic Copies of the original Writings. In a Word, we are confirmed in our Judgment, that the *Hebrew* Text is the ſame that it was and is ſtill in its original Purity.

Having obſerved thus much concerning the ſacred Canon of the Old Teſtament, we ſhall now endeavour to prove, that the Authority of the New Teſtament is equally confirmed by *external Teſtimonies*, or Tradition. We have the authentic Suffrage of the primitive Church, and the unanimous Conſent of the Chriſtians of the firſt Ages, that this Book is of divine Inſpiration, and that it is pure and uncorrupted.

Some of the Fathers and firſt Writers give us a Catalogue of the Books of the New Teſtament, and they are the very ſame with thoſe which we have at this Day. *Athanaſius* particularly, enumerating thoſe Books, ſets down all thoſe which we now embrace as canonical, and no others.

Many of the Fathers of the firſt Ages after Chriſt, as *Irenæus*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *&c.* quote the Places in the New Teſtament, as they now ſtand upon Record.

If it be objected, that in the Fathers, *ſometimes* the Text of Scripture is not exactly what we find it, and read it at this Day; it muſt be remembered that they ſometimes quot-

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ted the Meaning, and not the very Words. At other Times, their Memories failed them, as to the Words, and thence they changed them into others; and inſtead of thoſe in the Text, uſed ſome that were like them. So when they were in haſte, and not at leiſure to conſult the Text, they uſed ſuch Words and Expreſſions as they thought came neareſt to it.

Sometimes they contract the Words of the Text, and give only the brief Senſe of it. At other Times they enlarge it, and preſent us with a Comment upon it. Sometimes (as they ſee Occaſion, and as their Subject leads them to it) they tranſpoſe the Words, and even the Parts of the Text.

But no perſons ſhould hence infer, that the Scriptures of the New Teſtament then and now are not the very ſame. With reſpect to the Number of the ſacred Writers and their Books, it has always been the ſame; that is, the ſame Catalogue and Canon have been generally acknowledged and received by the Chriſtian Church.

It is true indeed, ſome particular Books have been queſtioned, but by a few only, and that only for Time: but the Church was at length fully ſatisfied concerning them; and the generality of Chriſtians agreed to own all thoſe Books which are now owned by us.

All the Eaſtern Churches held the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* to be canonical, though the *Latins*, it is granted, were not ſo unanimous. This Epiſtle, and that of St. *James*, the ſecond Epiſtle of St. *Peter*, and the *Apocalypſe* or *Revelation*, were queſtioned in the firſt Century, according to the Account of *Euſebius*, but he acquaints us withal, that they were afterwards, by general Conſent, received into the Canons of holy Scripture, for the Doubts were reſolved upon mature Deliberation; ſo that the very Queſtion of thoſe Books is now a Confirmation of their Truth and Authority; they were once Subjects of Doubt, that for the future they might be rendered unqueſtionable. With Reſpect to the reſt of the Books of the New Teſtament, they were never doubted of at all, but have the Approbation of the whole Church.

That the New Teſtament was firſt written in *Greek*, as we now receive it, is atteſted by the univerſal Conſent of the Ancients, who made Enquiry into theſe Things. Only two Books are excepted by ſome; for though many of the learned Moderns maintain that St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel was written originally in *Greek*, yet it cannot be denied, that ſome of the Fathers hold it was firſt written in *Hebrew* for the Sake of the believing Jews.

If we credit St. *Jerome*, the original *Hebrew* was extant in his Time, and he tranſlated the Goſpel into *Latin* from that Copy. Who tranſlated it into *Greek*, cannot be aſcertained; but it was either St. *Matthew*, himſelf, or ſome apoſtolical Perſon inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt; ſo that the *Greek* Verſion in our Hands, is from the ſame Spirit, and of the ſame Authority with the others.

The Fathers likewiſe are generally of Opinion, that St. *Paul* wrote the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, in their own Tongue; and that St. *Luke*, or St. *Clement*, tranſlated it into *Greek*.

The contrary is held by ſome of more modern Date, both of the Roman and reformed Religion; but excepting theſe two Books, it is univerſally agreed, that the whole New Teſtament was written in *Greek*; and one Reaſon might be, becauſe ſo great a Number of Jews lived among the Greeks, and uſed their Tongue; and therefore this Part of the Bible was properly written in *Greek*, as the other was long before tranſlated into that Tongue for the Uſe of the Jews. For the Sake of theſe diſperſed Jews (therefore called *the diſperſed among the Gentiles*, or according to the Original, *the Diſperſion of the Greeks*, John vii. 35.) who underſtood and ſpoke the *Greek* Language, the New Teſtament was put forth in that Tongue. Moreover, this was the more generally received Language at that Time, and therefore the moſt proper for the Propagation of the Goſpel.

This is a very good Argument; for though we do not think that the Jews at *Jeruſalem* ſpake no other than the Greek Tongue among themſelves as ſome confidently aſſert; yet it is certain, that the Greek Tongue was univerſally underſtood, and was with the Latins the Language of the Empire, and conſequently moſt proper for communicating the Chriſtian Religion to the World.

Tully informs us, that in all the Roman Empire, *Greek* was commonly underſtood: it is no Wonder therefore that the New Teſtament was in that Tongue, and that St. *Paul* writes not only to the *Galatians* but to the *Romans* in *Greek*, for they all underſtood it. It was the Language of the Polite at *Rome*, as the *French* is now with us; their very Women affected to learn and ſpeak *Greek*, for which they are jeered by a celebrated Satiriſt.

In ſhort, all the Eaſtern People ſpoke *Greek*, more or leſs, from the Time that *Alexander* the Great, and his Commanders, ſpread their Dominions in the Eaſt.

The *Syrians*, *Egyptians*, *Perſians*, and People of the Leſſer *Aſia*, were acquainted with that Language. The Jews of any conſiderable Quality underſtood *Greek*, as well as their own Tongue; whence *Joſephus*, a Jewiſh Prieſt (or of the Prieſtly Stock) wrote his Book in the faſhionable Language.

The Evangeliſts and Apoſtles then might well write in the ſame Tongue, it being ſo extenſive, and generally underſtood. It is eſpecially on another Account no Wonder, that St. *Paul* wrote in *Greek*, for it was his native Tongue, being of *Tarſus*, which was a City of *Greece*. We may then very juſtly look on the *Greek* Language, as the original Text of the New Teſtament.

It is generally agreed that theſe *Greek* Copies which we have now in Uſe are true and authentic, though in ſome things they differ, and none are obſerved to oppoſe them, but thoſe

thoſe who do it from ſome Motive of Intereſt and Deſign; that is, to maintain ſome peculiar Opinion, or indulge ſome particular Prejudice.

The Variety of Reading ſhould not prejudice us, much leſs ought we to alter the Readings of the Copies, and to one; and we may obſerve with an excellent Author, That "it is morally impoſſible, ſince "the Time of our Saviour, and "indeed for many hundred Years "before that, that the Scriptures "(particularly of the Old Teſta-"ment) ſhould have been corrup-"ed: for the Multitude of Copies "was then ſuch, hath been ſince "much more ſuch, and ſo far diſperſ-"ed, that n ither one Man, nor one "Body of Men, could ever get them "into their Hands to corrupt them; "and if ſome few or many Copies "had been corrupted, but not all, "the pure Number would have de-"tected the corrupt."

Again, Let it be conſidered, that all the ancient orthodox Writers of the Church cite thoſe Scriptures, as we now have them, in every Thing eſſential, which together with divers Reaſons already aſſigned, may confirm our Belief, that theſe Books of the Old and New Teſtament were indeed written by thoſe Authors, under whoſe Names they are now received; that theſe Scriptures which we now have, are the ſame which the primitive Church received from the Apoſtles; that the Copies we have of the Bible, are not corrupted; that God hath preſerved the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Teſtament from all conſiderable Change and Depravation (his Providence not permitting any ſuch Thing) that the Canon of Scripture which is now received, is the very ſame that it was at firſt, and which is the Sum and Subſtance of all, that the Truth and Authority of it are impregnable.

Thus we have argued from Tradition and the Teſtimony of the Church in order to prove the Authenticity and divine Original of the Scriptures, and if the Argument be properly ſupported, it will appear to be valid; for the Truth of the Copies, and the Authority of the Canon, are not to be decided by Scripture; but in the Way that all Controverſies of that Nature are handled.

As you would prove any other other Book to be authentic, ſo you muſt prove the Bible to be, viz. by ſufficient Teſtimony.

There is the ſame Reaſon for believing the ſacred Hiſtory that there is for believing any other Hiſtorical Writings that are extant; nay, the Teſtimonies in Behalf of the Scriptures, are more numerous than thoſe that can be urged for any other Writings.

Beſide, all that can be ſaid for the ſacred Volume in common with other Writings, we have ſhewn that this has ſome peculiar Evidences above all others.

The main Point we have inſiſted on is, that the Books of the Old and New Teſtament have been faithfully conveyed to us, and that they are vouched by the conſtant and univerſal

ſal Tradition, both of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church; and that theſe Books, and no others, are of the Canon of Scripture; for to be of the Canon of Scripture is no other than to be owned by the Univerſal Church for Writings divinely inſpired. The Church witneſſes and confirms the Authority of the Canonical Scriptures; for ſhe received them as Divine, and delivered them to us as ſuch.

But to prevent Miſtakes, we deſire that it may be obſerved, we do not inſinuate, that the Scriptures derive their Authority meerly from the Teſtimony of the Church. As a Clerk in any Court writes down and teſtifies, that ſuch an Act, Decree or Order, was paſſed by the King, Magiſtrate or People, and witneſſes that he hath faithfully kept theſe by him, and that they are the very ſame that at ſuch Time were paſſed by the aforeſaid Authority; yet the Authority of this Act, Decree or Order, reſts not in the Clerk, but wholly in the King, Magiſtrate or People. So the Church records and keeps the ſacred Writings of the Bible, and bears witneſs that they have been faithfully preſerved, and that they are the genuine Writings of thoſe Perſons whoſe Names are prefixed to them; but the divine Authority of the Scriptures depend not on the Church, but on the Books, and Authors themſelves, being divinely inſpired.

Indeed the Authority of the Scriptures cannot depend on the Church, becauſe the Church itſelf depends on the Scriptures. Theſe muſt be proved before the Church can be proved to be properly conſtituted.

We cannot know the Church but by the Scriptures. Therefore the Scriptures muſt be known before the Church.

It follows then, that the Papiſts are very unreaſonable and abſurd in making the ultimate Reſolution of Faith to be into the Teſtimony and Authority of the Church. This we, as Proteſtants, diſown as a palpable Error; but at the ſame Time it is reaſonable to hold, that the Teſtimony of the Church is one good Argument and Proof of the Truth of the ſacred Scripture; according to that Saying of St. *Auguſtine, I ſhould not believe the Goſpel, if the Authority of the Church did not move me.* Not that he founds the Goſpel or the Doctrine of Chriſtianity, and the Truth of it, on the Teſtimony of the Church, as the Papiſts are wont to infer from theſe Words, and frequently quote them to this Purpoſe. The Father's Meaning is this; That by the Teſtimony and Conſent of the Church, he believed the Book of the Goſpel, to be the very Book that was written by the Evangeliſts.

That this is the Senſe of the Expreſſion is plain from the Scope of it; for he ſpeaks there of the Copies or Writings, not the Doctrine contained in them. He ſeems to rely on this; that ſo great a Number of Perſons of Knowledge and Integrity as compoſed the Church, aſſerted the Evangelical Writings to be the Writings of ſuch as were really inſpired by

by the Holy Ghoſt; and that they were true and genuine, and not corrupted.

The whole Body of Scripture is atteſted by the ſame univerſal Suffrage of the Church, that is, the unanimous Conſent of the Apoſtles, and of the firſt Chriſtians, and of thoſe that immediately ſucceeded them; ſeveral of which laid their Lives down to vindicate the Truth of theſe Writings.

This is the *external Teſtimony* given to the holy Scriptures. It is the general Perſuaſion and Atteſtation of the ancient Church, that theſe are the Scriptures of Truth; that they were penned by holy Prophets and Apoſtles, immediately directed by the Holy Spirit of God, who therefore could not err.

It was uſual heretofore among the Pagan Law-givers, to attribute their Laws to ſome Deity, though they were of their own Invention, intending thereby to conciliate Reverence to them, and to commend them to the People. But there is no ſuch Cheat put upon us. God Himſelf is really the Author of the holy Scriptures; theſe ſacred Laws come immediately from him; they are of divine Inſpiration. There is no Doubt of the Divinity of the Scriptures, and conſequently there is Aſſurance of the Infallibility of them.

As it may reaſonbly be expected that we ſhould treat of the *Apocryphal* Books, before we diſmiſs this Subject, we ſhall endeavour to diſcuſs the Nature and Uſe of them, eſpeically as they are appointed to be read in the Courſe of our Liturgy.

We find theſe Books excluded from the Canon of Scripture, by thoſe who muſt be deemed to have been the beſt Judges, viz. the Jews, who were the great Keepers of the Scriptures. They never took theſe into the Number of the Books of holy Writ, and that for theſe two Reaſons,

Firſt, Becauſe they were not written by the Prophets. The Jews believed that the Spirit of Prophecy ceaſed among them, as ſoon as *Malachi* ceaſed to prophecy.

They acknowledged no divine Inſpiration after his Time, and accordingly received not the *Apochryphal* Books into the *Canon of Scripture*, that is, Books divinely inſpired.

What was written after the Time of *Malachi*, who was the laſt Prophet, was not Canonical, was not of divine Authority, and therefore is not emphatically called *Scripture*, for as *all Scripture is given by Inſpiration*, and as HOLY MEN *ſpoke, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*.

Inſpiration is the Mark and Criterion of Scripture, conſequently thoſe Writings which were not by Inſpiration of God, nor from the immediate Dictate of the Holy Ghoſt, are not to be accounted *Holy Scriptures*, and ſuch are the *Apocbryphal Writings*, they were written after the Ceſſation of Prophecy and divine Inſpiration, and therefore are not of divine Authority, and cannot be eſtemed *canonical Scriptures*.

Secondly, the Jews received not the

the Apocrypha into their Canon, becauſe it was written in Greek, not in Hebrew, as all their canonical Books are; for they affirm that God would not give them Scriptures in an unknown Tongue: The Oracles of God were to be committed to his People in the authentic Language, which is that of the Jews: the Apocryphal Writings not being ſuch are rejected by them, and not taken into the Canon of ſacred Writ.

As they were not received by the Jewiſh Church, neither are they by the Chriſtian: It is very remarkable that Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who frequently quote the canonical Books, never quote any of the Apocryphal ones; which gives us to underſtand, that they were not reputed as inſpired Writings, otherwiſe it is moſt reaſonable to think, that our Saviour, or the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles would at one Time or other have cited ſome one Paſſage out of theſe Books, it being evidently their great Work to prove the Truth of what they delivered from the holy Scriptures, which were inſpired by God in former Times.

They embraced all Occaſions of eſtabliſhing Chriſtianity upon the Writings of the inſpired Prophets, who went before; therefore if the *Apochryphal* Writings had been of the Number, they would certainly have been quoted by them; and becauſe they are not, it is an Argument that they are not inſpired Writings.

Again, the Chriſtian Church which immediately ſucceeded that which was in the Days of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, received not theſe Writings as divinely inſpired, and therefore excluded them from the Canon of Scripture.

Look in the Writings of the ancient Fathers (who doubtleſs made it their Buſineſs to ſearch into the Canon of Scripture, and to be ſatisfied which were the Books that were divinely inſpired) and there you will ſee that thoſe of the Eaſtern Church received only the Jews Canon of Scripture as the Old Teſtament.

Thus *Origin* recites the canonical Books of it as they are now reckoned, and *Cyril* of *Jeruſalem* hath thoſe expreſs Word's: "Read two and "twenty Books, [that is, all the Ca"nonical ones] but have nothing to "do with the Apocryphal ones. "Study and mediate only on theſe "Scriptures, which we confidently "read in the Church. The Apoſtles "and firſt Biſhops were their Guides, "and were more wiſe and religious "than thou art; and theſe were the "Men who delivered theſe Scriptures "to us. Thou then being a Son of "the Church, do not go beyond her "Bounds and Order, but acknow"ledge and ſtudy only two and "twenty Books of the Old Teſta"ment."

Other Fathers of the Church teſtify that theſe Books, and no others, of the Old Teſtament, which we receive now, were the Canonical Books of old, and received as ſuch by the firſt Chriſtians.

Thoſe eminent Lights of the Latin Church *Ruſinus*, *Jerom*, and *Hilary*, diſown as canonical, the Books of *Apo-*

Apochrypha, the two latter are very poſitive; *Jerom* expreſsly declares, that the canonical Books of the Old Teſtament are but two and twenty, the exact Number of the Hebrew Alphabet; and he enumerates the particular Books which conſtitute the Whole.

Hilary likewiſe gives us the juſt Catalogue of the Books of the Old Teſtament, and peremptorily affirms that there are but two and twenty canonical ones, which are the ſame with the thirty nine, according to the reckoning in our Bibles.

There is another Reaſon, beſides the univerſal Suffrage of the Chriſtian Church, why the Apocryphal Books are ejected out of the Canon; it is this, becauſe ſome Things are falſe and contrary to the canonical Scriptures, as in *Eccleſiaſticus* xlvi. 20. 2 *Eſdras* vi. 40, and ſome Things are vicious, as in *Maccabees* xiv. 42.

After theſe Obſervations, it is eaſy to anſwer what the Romaniſts alledge in Support of the other Side of the Queſtion. They quote the third Council of *Carthage*, which they tell us received the Apocryphal Books into the Canon; among the Fathers they affirm St. *Auguſtin* over them; beſides that two Popes *Innocent* the Firſt, and *Gelaſius* took theſe Books which we ſtile *Apocryphal* into the Canon.

As for the Council which they alledge, it was but a provincial one, and therefore cannot be ſet in Competition with more authentic and general Councils who have affirmed to the contrary. Nor muſt one ſingle Father whom they quote, ſtand out againſt a great Number of Greek and Latin Fathers, who concur in rejecting the *Apocryphal* Books.

The Popes bear great Sway with our Adverſaries, but they are but two in Number, and cannot be compared with thoſe Councils, and that multitude of Fathers who aſſert and maintain our Opinion.

Yet after all that hath been ſaid, we eſteem the Apocryphal Writings worthy of being read and peruſed. Though there are ſome Things amiſs in them, yet we pay much Deference to them, as containing many hiſtorical Facts, and furniſhing us with Matter of Jewiſh Antiquity, as likewiſe becauſe there are many doctrinal and moral Truths in them, eſpecially in the Books of *Wiſdom* and *Eccleſiaſticus*.

For this Cauſe we bear great Reſpect to them, rank them next to the holy Canon, and prefer them to all prophane Authors. They obtained this Preference from the ancient Fathers, who frequently mentioned them in their Sermons and Diſcourſes, which ſeems to be one Reaſon why theſe Apocryphal Books were made canonical by ſome of the Church of *Rome*.

But all that can be inferred from hence is, that theſe Books were in their Kind uſeful and profitable, as indeed they are; therefore St. *Jerom* writes, the *Church receives not theſe Books into the Canon of Scripture, though ſhe allows them to be read.* Concerning theſe Writings, our Church

Church well ſaith [quoting St. *Jerom* for it.] *She doth read them for Example of Life, and Inſtruction of Manners, but yet doth not apply them to eſtabliſh any Doctrine.*

Now this affords us an exact Notion of the Nature of theſe Books, which is, that they contain excellent Rules of Life, and are very uſeful to inform us of our Duty in ſeveral important Points, but as they are not dictated by the Holy Ghoſt, as the other Books of Scripture, they are not the infallible Standard of divine Doctrine, and therefore are not to be applied and made Uſe of to that Purpoſe: Thus have we endeavoured to ſtate the Nature and Uſe of the Apocryphal Writings, according to our own Judgment, and that of many learned and pious Men, and apprehend upon the Whole that the impartial Reader will be convinced that theſe Writings, though good in general, want the Confirmation of a divine Original, and therefore ought not to be numbered among the Books of Canonical Scripture.

But to return to our immediate Purpoſe; let us conſider what Authority the ſacred Writings derive from the Teſtimony of Enemies and Strangers, eſpecially of Pagans.

It is a Maxim in Civil Law, and adopted by all Men of Reaſon and Reflection, that the Teſtimony of an Enemy is of all others moſt deciſive.

The Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church, as we have ſhewn already, give their Teſtimony to the Scriptures; but beſides theſe Witneſſes there are others, there is the Atteſtation of Forreigners and Adverſaries. Theſe fully teſtify the Truth of what is delivered in the Holy Bible, we have the Approbation of Heathen Writers to confirm many of the Things related in the Old Teſtament, and both profeſſed Heathens and Jews atteſt ſundry Thing of the New Teſtament, and vouch the Truth and Authority of the ſame.

We ſhall proceed diſtinctly, and begin with the Old, obſerving that in ſeveral particulars, even the Pagan World, gives Teſtimony to this ſacred Volume; that the Gentiles relate many Circumſtances therein contained; and that the great Truths, fundamental Principles, and equitable Practices which we read in the Books of the Old Teſtament, are to be met with in prophane Writers, but evidently appear to be taken from the ſacred Authors.

The Heathens borrowed many of their Rites and Ceremonies from Traditions which were formed in the holy Scriptures. They derived many Things reſpecting their Religion and Manners, from the ſacred Fountain, though it is certain they have moſt induſtriouſly laboured to pollute them: but we hope to render it manifeſt that they borrowed them from thence, and to prove at the ſame Time, that the principal Subjects of the Old Teſtament have been atteſted both by the fabulous and ſerious Hiſtory of the Pagans.

We could mention many Writers who have carried this Notion beyond the Limits of Reaſon and Probability

lity, and conjectured that every Occurence in the Pagan Hiſtroy, had ſome Reference to, or was derived from the Holy Scriptures.

But we ſhall avoid ſuch vain and idle Notions, and only repreſent to the curious, and critical Enquirers, thoſe Paſſages in Pagan Writers, which with great Reaſon we may conclude were taken from the Books of the Old Teſtament. In a Word, we ſhall endeavour to preſent the ſacred Hiſtory of the Bible, through the Fables of the Heathens, in order to add to the Validity the Confirmation of thoſe Truths. Now let us conſider.

1. The Creation: this, as it is particularly deſcribed in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*, is plainly to be found in Pagan Authors; who without Doubt, derived it from Scripture; for though a Man by the Light of Nature may know that the World had a Beginning, yet the particular Manner of its Beginning, as deſcribed by ſome Heathen Authors could not be known but by divine Revelation; wherefore it is with much Reaſon aſſerted, that the Pagans borowed this Notion from God's revealed Will in Scripture, and as a Conſequence, that they hereby atteſt the Truth of the ſacred Volume.

The general Opinion of the ancient Gentiles was, that the World was made out of a preceding *Chaos*, which they repreſent as a rude, indigeſted Maſs of Matter, reduced to no Shape or Form.

The ancient Poet *Orpheus* held, that this *Chaos* was the firſt Principle of all Things. *Heſiod* agrees with him, affirming that the *Chaos* was that out of which all Bodies were made. *Ovid* gives this Deſcription in a very particular Manner, in the Beginning of his Metamorphoſes; where, in beautiful Language, he defines the Origin of all Things. Now this Deſcription of the *Latin* Poet will, on an impartial Compariſon, appear to be founded on thoſe Words of *Moſes*, Gen. ii. *The Earth was without Form, and void; and Darkneſs was on the Face of the Deep.*

This dark and formleſs Heap of *Water and Earth* mingled together, contained in it the firſt Elements of all Things that were made afterwards, hence ſprang the World, as it is now ſhaped and modelled.

From the Account which *Moſes* gives of the Creation, the old Pagan Writers made the *Ocean* to be the Origin of all Generation; their Propoſition in Fact is no nother than this, that that *moiſt* and *fluid Matter* gave Being to all Bodies that exiſt.

Hence it is that ſome of the Stoics held the *Chaos* to be no other than *Water*, as *Philo* informs us: They think (ſays he) that *Water* and the *Chaos* being the ſame, the latter Term is derived from a *Greek* Word, which ſignifies flowing or pouring out.

Hence *Seneca* declares it to be the Opinion of this Sect of Philoſophers, that *Water* is the firſt Principle of all Things.

Thales, one of the firſt that made Enquiry into Nature, expreſly maintained, that all Things were produc-

ed of Water. The Words of *Tully* concerning this ancient Philoſopher, are very remarkable, "*Thales* affirmed (ſaid he) that Water was the "Beginning of Things, and that "God was that Mind which made "all Things of Watter."

This ſeems moſt ſignally to refer to what *Moſes* ſays, ſpeaking of the Origin of the Univerſe, that *the Spirit of God moved on the Face of the Waters*, Gen. i. 2. giving us to underſtand, that Water and Slime were the material Cauſe and firſt Principle of all Things; and that God was that Spirit or Mind which made all Things out of thoſe firſt Waters.

The Egyptians were of this Opinion, and therefore worſhipped this Element, as *Strabo* obſerves: Without doubt, the Ancients borrowed from the Moſaical Hiſtory, that Notion which implies, "that at the "firſt Creation, all Things were con"tained in Water, and lay brood"ing there together, and conſe"quently that Water was the pri"mitive Matter of the Univerſe."

To the Chaos and Water the Ancients added another concurrent Principle, namely Night: that the World had its Beginning from *Night* and *Chaos*, was a univerſal Tradition of the Pagans, both Poets and Philoſophers, ſuch as *Heſiod* and *Homer*, among the former; and *Thales* and *Plato*, among the latter. Theſe frequently ſpeak of *Chaos* and *Night*, or *Erebus*, and tell us, that all things were begotten by them; which Opinion is doubtleſs derived from thoſe Words in *Gen.* i. 2. *Darkneſs was on the Face of the Deep.*

The *Deep* is their *Chaos*, and the Darkneſs is their *Night* or *Erebus*; for the known and uſual Signification of the latter Term is Darkneſs. Hence the Pagans, who had ſeen ſome of theſe Writings, came to have this Sentiment, that *Night* and *Darkneſs* were the firſt Principles of the World. This is the ſame with what *Moſes* delivers, only it is expreſſed in different Terms.

The ancient Philoſophers have likewiſe agreed with the Moſaic Account concerning God's dividing, ſeparating, and digeſting of this confuſed Chaos and Darkneſs.

Anaxagoras has been reckoned by ſome in the Number of ancient Atheiſts, but with little Reaſon; for (as *Plutarch* writes of him he was the firſt that denied Fortune or Fate to be the Cauſe or Principle of the fair Order and Harmony of the Univerſe. *Diogenes Laerius* gives theſe as his very Words; "All Things "were in a Heap and Jumble at firſt: "afterwards came the eternal Mind, "and diſpoſed and ordered them in "an excellent Manner."

Tully aſſerts, "That thoſe Parti"cles of infinite Matter, which were "alike in themſelves and at firſt "very confuſed, were afterwards "brought into Order by the divine "Mind." This was the Work of God in the Creation. Now whence have they this Notion concerning the Origin of the World? Theſe Speculations concerning the Riſe of the World were not their own; they were

were traditional Principles; that is, they received them from the Bible; their Philoſophy in this Point was founded on the Account of the divine Penman *Moſes*; the Sum of which was, that God firſt of all produced a Chaos, that is, the rude Beginnings of Earth ſwallowed up and even overwhelmed with the *watry Abyſs*, out of which dark, confuſed and indigeſted Materials, he made all Things, both in Heaven and Earth, as out of the firſt Matter, which by a divine Skill and Power he ſeparated and divided, till it aroſe to the excellent and complete Frame wherein it appears at this Day.

Thus the ancient Philoſophy of the Gentiles was borrowed from the Moſaic Deſcription of the Creation; thus the Writings of the moſt renowned Heathen Philoſophers bear Witneſs to the firſt Penman of the Old Teſtament.

2d. The Production of *Adam* and *Eve*, is atteſted by the ſame Perſons. That the firſt Man was formed of the Earth, or the Clay of the Ground, is affirmed by the moſt authentic Authors among them.

We ſhall omit ſeveral Quotations out of the Greek Poets, who were the firſt Philoſophers among the Pagans, as *Orpheus*, *Heſiod*, and *Homer*, who teſtify this very Thing, and refer to *Ovid*, who was well acquainted with all the ancient Notions of the Gentiles, and relates the chief Paſſages in the Moſaic Story concerning the Original of the World, and that in Words as near to thoſe of *Moſes* as poſſible.

In the Cloſe of his Account of the Creation, he writes. *Metam. lib.* 1. "That Man was made after the "Creation of all other Things, that "he was endowed with ſuperior Un-"derſtanding, that he was made to "have Dominion over all other crea-"ted Things.

Now this exactly agrees with the Account of *Moſes*, Gen. xxvi. 28. where we read, That Man was made to have Dominion over the *Fiſh of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air, and over every Thing that moveth on the Earth.*

Here are two of the chief Things which are delivered in the Beginning of that ſacred Hiſtory *Geneſis*; that Man was made laſt of all, and to have Rule and Dominion over all the Creation.

Ovid applied and attributed this Formation of Man to *Promotheus*, the Name certainly of the wiſe God; for *Promotheus* with the Greeks (from whom he borrowed this) is *wiſe, provident, ſagacious:* and this *Promotheus* formed a Man of Clay, which agreeth with the Formation of *Adam*, recorded by the inſpired Writer.

When *Ovid* adds, that *he took Fire from Heaven to animate his lumpleſs Clay*, we muſt pardon this innocent Addition; for it was the conſtant Practice of theſe Men to put in ſomething of their own, in order to diſguiſe the ſacred Story with their own Fable and Invention; though in this Caſe we have Reaſon to applaud the Poet, who knew that dull and inert Matter, could not actuate and enliven itſelf, but that there was

Need

Need of ſome heavenly and divine Principle to ſet it on Work, ſome active Day of Life from above to inſpire it. What then is this, but the *Breath of Life* mentioned in *Gen.* ii. 7, by which Man's Body was enlivened and invigorated? For when it is there ſaid, that *God formed Man out of the Earth*, it is immediately added, *He breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul*; from which Manner of Expreſſion, and that other in *Gen.* vii. 22. *the Breath of the Spirit of Life*, the eminent Sages among the Greeks (who were no Strangers to this and other Texts,) derived two Notions.

The firſt was, That the Soul is *Breath:* and accordingly in the *Greek* and *Latin*, it hath its Name, from a Word which ſignifies, *breathing*.

Another Notion which they derived from this metaphorical Expreſſion of Breathing or Afflation was, that the Soul, the rational Soul of Man is a Part of God; for as Breath is ſomething that comes from within a Man: ſo Souls (that are ſet forth by Breath) are the Emanations of God; they came from him, and are Parts of him. All this is derived (if we miſtake not) from that Paſſage, in the *Moſaic* Hiſtory, concerning the Production of Man, God breathed into him the *Breath of Life*.

The making of *Eve* out of *Adam* was abſolutely intimated in the Greek Term, which Plato uſes to deſcribe the Firſt Man; it ſignifies a Mixture of both Sexes.

This Fable of *Plato* was from the Jewiſh Tradition, that the firſt Man was made an *Hermaphrodite*; that he had two Bodies jointed together, the one Male, the other Female; and that the Creator divided him into two diſtinct Bodies, whence aroſe Man and Woman.

If the Jewiſh Rabbies (who were better acquainted with Scripture) entertained this Rule and random Opinion, *Plato* may be well excuſed, who perhaps had it only on Tradition, and had not the Means to correct his Miſtakes which they had. But it is plain beyond a Demonſtration, that this Fable is a Corruption of the ſacred Story, which ſpeaking of our firſt Parents, ſaith, *God called their Name* Adam; as if they having but one Name, ſignified they were but one Perſon. And again, in the ſame Verſe, *Male and Female created he them*; as if the firſt Man, who is ſpoken of in the Verſe immediately foregoing, conſiſted of a double Sex. It is evident that the Words relate to both, and the reaſon why the Name *Adam* is given to both, is becauſe they were both of them from the Earth, one immediately, the other remotely; but afterwards we read that they had diſtinct Names, *Adam* being appropriated to the Man, and *Eve* to the Woman.

This ridiculous Fable which the Heathen Philoſopher had picked up, might be occaſioned likewiſe from a Miſunderſtanding of the Text; *God took one of the Man's Ribs, and out of it made he a Woman*; becauſe the Woman was found out of the Man's Side; they inferred that *Adam* was

was at first both Man and Woman, and that the Woman at her first Make stuck to his Side, which though a gross Error confirms the Truth and Antiquity of the Book of *Moses* that assures us of *Eve*'s Formation out of *Adam*, which was the Circumstance that gave Rise to this erroneous Tradition.

The first and innocent State of Man, together with some Circumstances, which could be known only from the Book of *Moses*, is spoken of by the ancient Writers among the Heathen. Thus *Hesiod* gives us an admirable Description of it; and *Plato* in his *Politics* tells us, that in those primitive Times, Man got his Living without Trouble and Labour, that he fed only on the Fruit of the Earth, and that Nakedness was one Attendant of that first and golden Age of the World, alluding to *Gen.* ii. 25. *They were both naked, the Man and his Wife.* So an ancient Writer informs us, that the Egyptians find in their old Writings, that the first Men and Women were naked; in the Sibylline Verses, which are borrowed from the Scripture, the same Allegories and Descriptions are used in setting forth the happy Age, which you find used in the sacred Volume.

Without Doubt the blessed State of Paradise is referred to by *Ovid*, in his Description of the golden Age, or *Saturn*'s Reign. There we may see represented the Simplicity and Innocence of our first Parents, the Peace and Tranquility, the Contentment and Satisfaction which were peculiar to the State of Integrity. *Paradise* itself the Seat of this Happiness seems to have been known by the ancient Pagans, for it is probable their Writers understood this, when they tell us of the Elysian Field; for Gardens, (such as was Paradise) and pleasant Fields are the same with them.

Plato in describing these observes, that they were blessed with a mild and gentle Air, pleasant Streams, a constant Spring, fragrant Flowers and Fruits ever growing. Of these *Virgil* speaks in his sixth *Æneid*; it is not improbable, that some or all of these Greek Fables were founded in Truth, and arose from the Account of the inspired Books, which informs us, *that God placed Man in a Garden*, the Garden of *Eden*, which signifies Pleasure and Delight; for it is further added that *here grew every Tree that is pleasant to the Sight, and good for Food*, Gen. ii. 9.

And this Garden was the Platform of those before-mentioned, so the Tree of Life in this Garden gave Rise to the poets *Nectar* and *Ambrosia*, which are no other than the Food and Repast of those earthly Gods, which they suppose to have inhabited *Elysium*.

Nectar (according to one Derivation of it) made the Drinkers ever youthful; and another Etymology speaks this Drink to be such as suffers them not to die. These were the very Blessings of the *Tree of Life*, which should have made the Eaters of it immortal, and secured them in a State of Blessedness for ever.

Thus the Production of Man, and divers Things referring to his bleſſed State of Innocency, which are found in the Writings of the Heathens, were derived from the ſacred Fountains, and conſequently the Writings of theſe Heathens do in ſome Meaſure atteſt and confirm to us the Truth and Certainty of the holy Scriptures.

3d. The Fall of *Adam*, and the ſeveral Particular relating to it are to be found in theſe Pagan Records.

The Forerunners of it, viz. the degenerate Angels are ſpoken of by that ancient Philoſopher *Empedocles*, as *Plutarch* relates, for whom elſe could he mean by his *Dæmons*, to whom he gives a Greek Appellation, that ſignifies *Heaven-fallen* Creatures, than theſe apoſtate Spirits, who were thruſt down from the Region of Happineſs above, and became Devils, from their oppoſing the Government of the Moſt High?

It appears highly probable to ſuppoſe, that our firſt Parent *Eve* was meant by *Pandora*, whom *Heſiod* and others of the Ancients mention, acquainting us, that out of her deadly Box, which ſhe gave to *Epimetheus*, flew all Evil into the World, and thereby ſhe became the Original of all the miſerable Occurrences that happen to Mankind.

Eve was this *Pandora*, who preſented the *Fruit of the Tree unto her Husband*, as it is expreſſed, *Gen.* iii. 6. and he himſelf afterwards with unſpeakable Regret, and too late an Inſight into his Condition (whence he juſtly merits his Title of *Epimetheus*) repeats the ſame, *She gave me of it*, ver. 13, and with it imparted all Evil to Mankind; from that unhappy Gift therefore, and from her imparting all Evils to the World, ſhe had the Name of *Pandora* among the firſt Greek Poets, who had learned from the inſpired Writings, that from her ſprung all the Miſeries and Calamities of this Life, and even Death itſelf.

With reſpect to *Original Sin*, and the early Corruption and Depravation of Man's Nature, which was the Fruit of our firſt Parent's Tranſgreſſion, we cannot but obſerve, that it was mentioned by the Gentiles of old, who call it the *congenite Sin* that is, the Sin that is born with us, the *domeſtic Evil of Mankind, the natural Repugnancy of Man's Temper to Reaſon, a mortal kind of Life, a many-headed Beaſt, &c.*

The Moraliſts are full of ſuch Notions, and complain of the Infirmity of Human Nature, that it is very much depraved; that the Fountains are polluted, the Springs defiled; and that Man is propenſe to all Evil, and averſe to what is good and virtous.

The Greek and Roman Philoſophers all complain of the low and degenerate Condition of Man, eſpecially the beſt Sects, which were the Stoics and Platoniſts.

Seneca frequently in his Epiſtles and other Diſcourſes, acknowledges, and mournfully reflects upon the Lapſe of Human Nature.

Others ſpeak moſt feelingly of the Defect of a former Innocency, of the De-

Departure of Souls from God, of the ſtrong Propenſity of Human Nature to Evil, &c.

This is not mentioned as if we imagined they might not partly derive theſe Notions from an inward Senſe they had of their innate Evil; but only to infer the Probability that there was a Tradition among them concerning the firſt Cauſe and Author of this Evil.

Plato himſelf ſpeaks very ſenſibly of this Loſs of the firſt State of Purity and Happineſs, and relates the Defection of Man from his primitive Condition, from whence he ſaith flowed all Miſchiefs into the World. This Philoſopher held, that Men's Souls were created happy, and that afterwards they apoſtatized. Now it is highly probable, that from the Writings of *Moſes* (with which he was acquainted) he derived the Account of Man's Fall, and then wrapped it up in this obſcure Manner, which was his uſual Method, as appears from his Writings.

If we enquire further, we ſhall find that the Gentile World was not ignorant of the ſeveral Circumſtances of the Fall. It was an ancient Tradition amongſt the Pagans, that a kind of malignant Spirits, malicious Dæmons, envied the Happineſs of Mankind, and did what they could to moleſt them, and to hinder them of their Felicity.

The Pagans and Platonic Philoſophers often ſpeak of theſe envious and malicious Spirits; the Origin of which we can conceive to be no other than that mentioned by *Moſes* concerning the Devil's tempting our firſt Parents, *Gen.* iii. 1, &c.

There was alſo this Circumſtance of the Hiſtory of Man's Fall among the Heathens, *that the Devil appeared in the Likeneſs of a Serpent*; preparatory to which is that which *Plato* ſaith, that in *Saturn*'s Days, People *could talk and hold Diſcourſe with Beaſts as well as Men*, alluding to the well known Colloquy between *Eve* and the *Serpent*, and her Seduction by holding Diſcourſe with him.

The Devil's aſſuming the Form of a Serpent, and his circumventing our firſt Parents thereby, is intimated to the Heathens by *Pherecydes*, an ancient Writer, who uſes the Greek Word for *Serpent*, as the Title of that Great One, who oppoſed *Saturn*. The Truth of which Story is, that the apoſtate Angels, or Devils, oppoſed God at the beginning of the World; the Ringleader of which curſed Spirits was he, that in the Shape of a Serpent aſſaulted our firſt Parents. That was that *Demoniacal Serpent*.

Euſebius is of the ſame Opinion, affirming that this *Ophionens* the Greek Word) refers to the Devil in the Form of a Serpent; and adds that *Pherecydes* was converſant with the *Phœnicians*, who worſhipped this Deity under the Form of a Serpent, the Devil affecting to be adored in that Shape and Form which he firſt aſſumed.

Upon the whole, from what has been obſerved under this Head, every candid Perſon muſt allow, that there are manifeſt Alluſions in the Pagan Writers

Writers, to the Fall of Man, and its dire Effects, and conſequently that their Authenticity receives Confirmation thereby. But,

4thly. From the Fall of Man, till after the Confuſion of Tongues, and Diſperſion of *Babel*, there are many ſingular Circumſtances related by Pagan Writers, of which they could have no Knowledge, but from the Old Teſtament.

Enoch's being taken up by God, gave Occaſion to the Stories of their Heroes being tranſlated, of *Aſtrea* and others leaving the World, and aſcending to Heaven alive, and being transformed into Stars and celeſtial Signs.

Again, the Teſtimonies of the Pagans concerning the long Lives of the People of the firſt Age of the World, was evidently taken from the ſacred Hiſtory, according to what *Joſephus* affirms, "All that have "committed unto Writing the Antiquities, either of the Greek or "Barbarians, atteſt this Longevity "of the Men before the Flood." And immediately he ſubjoins, "*Manethos*, the Egyptian Writer, *Beroſus*, the Chaldean, and *Jerom*, "the Egyptian agree with us in this. "Alſo *Heſiod*, with *Hecatæue*, *Hellanicus*, and *Acuſilaus*; *Ephorus* "and *Nicolas* tell us, that thoſe "People of Old lived a thouſand "Years." *Joſeph Antiq. Lib.* 1. "chap. 4.

Now this is an indiſputable Confirmation of the Truth of what we read ſo often in the Account of *Moſes* concerning the firſt People of the World, viz. that they commonly lived ſeven, eight, or nine hundred Years.

The Greek and Latin Poets relate likewiſe, that there were Giants in the primitive Times of the World, which was probably borrowed from *Gen.* vi. 4, where *Moſes* ſpeaking of the Times before the Flood, tells us, that *there were Giants* in the Earth in thoſe Days.

Beroſus, the Chaldean Prieſt and Hiſtorian, relates how wicked and bedauched the old World was, how *Noah* told them of it, and of their approaching Deſtruction by Means of the Deluge, the Fame of which was univerſally ſpread among the Pagans, moſt of their Hiſtorians, according to *Joſephus*, have made mention of *Noah*'s Flood.

Lucian mentions moſt of the Particulars which are recorded in the ſixth and ſeventh Chapters of *Geneſis*, concerning the Deluge; ſuch as the *natural* Cauſe of it, which was the exceſſive Rain or Fall of Water from Heaven, and the opening of the Fountains below. Likewiſe the *moral* Cauſe of it; the Corruption and Wickedneſs of the World: that People at that Time violated their Oaths, entertained not Strangers, were hardened againſt the Cries of Diſtreſs, that they were in every Reſpect vicious, profligate, and abandoned, and thereby deſerved this heavy Judgment. The ſame Author mentions the Preſervation of *Noah*, and his Family in the Ark, with the Manner of their being preſerved, namely, by ſheltering themſelves in

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a great Ark, and that thus he and his Wife and Children were reſerved for a ſecond Generation. That this befel *Noah* on Account of his ſingular Piety; that with him entered into the Ark, two of every Species of Animals, and being ſhut up there, they offered no Violence to each other, but maintained the greateſt Harmony.

Noah's erecting an Altar, after he came out of the Ark, is expreſly taken Notice of. Theſe are the Circumſtances, ſaith *Lucian*, which the *Greeks* relate from their Archives of the Flood; all of which exactly correſpond with the Narrative of *Moſes*; only *Deucalion* is put inſtead of *Noah*.

Plutarch, an Author of great Repute, ſpeaks of ſending the Dove out of the Ark, as a Sign of the abating of the Flood, or rather to diſcover whether the Waters were decreaſed; and he adds, that it turned into the Ark again: but this Author, as well as the former, diſguiſes *Noah*, under the Name of *Deucalion*, it being the uſual Manner of the Greeks, to affix new Names to Perſons.

From the Dove's bringing in an Olive-Branch, we find in all Ages that this hath been ever the Symbol of Peace and Concord, of Agreement and Friendſhip.

Livy tells us, it was ſo among the *Carthaginians*, among the *Greeks*.

Polybius informs us, that it was the ſame among the moſt barbarous Nations; for when *Hannibal* was paſſing the *Alps*, thoſe People came and met him with Olive-Branches in their Hands: this (as he ſubjoins) being a Badge and Sign of Friendſhip among thoſe barbarous People. Whence more probably was this derived, than from the Hiſtory of the Flood, written by *Moſes*?

We might here obſerve what *Ovid* ſaith concerning *Deucalion* and his Wife, viz. That as ſoon as the Deluge ceaſed, they betook themſelves to their Devotion, and ſolemnly worſhipped the Gods, which doubtleſs refers to what the ſacred Story relates, That *Noah* erected an Altar (the firſt we read of) to ſacrifice to God, and to praiſe him for his miraculous Deliverance from the tremendous Deluge. Thus among the Pagans we find unqueſtionable Monuments of the Truth of the Bible.

The next remarkable Occurence after the Flood to be found in the Pagan Records is, the Attempt to build the Tower of Babel.

Beroſus mentions it, but with theſe Additions (if we may call them Additions, as they have ſome Kind of Ground in the ſacred Hiſtory) that it was built by Giants, that thoſe Giants were *Terræ Filij*, or *Sons of the Earth*; that they waged War againſt the Gods, were at length diſperſed; and that the Building was beaten down by a great Wind.

Joſephus affirms that the Building of the Tower of *Babel* is mentioned by *Heſtiæus*; and by one of the *Sibyls*; and *Euſebius* teſtifies the Circumſtance in his *Evangelical Preparation*.

The ancient Poets turn this Fact

of the ſacred Hiſtory into the Fable of the *Titans*, whom they feigned to have heaped Mountains upon Mountains to ſcale Heaven, and combat with the Gods: and by Name *Ovid* mentions *Japheth (Japetus)* one of *Noah*'s Sons, as one of the Ringleaders in the prepoſterous Attempt.

Homer tells us, they caſt up three Hills one upon another, *Oſa* on *Olympus*, and ſhady *Pelion* on *Oſa*, hoping thereby to make their Way to the Heavens; but the aſpiring Deſign was fruſtrated, for the bold and preſumptuous Invaders were diſperſed by the Thunder of *Jove*.

Now all this Fiction of the Giants, both Greek and Latin, was derived from what the Moſaic Hiſtory relates, *Gen.* xi. 3, &c. That *Nimrod*, a great Hunter, a giant-like Man, with his Aſſociates attempted to build a City and Town to teach up to Heaven, which the Pagans interpreted into a Defiance of the Gods, and waging War with them.

It muſt be confeſſed, that they ſpoke hyperbolically, when they ſaid, *Let us build a City and a Tower to reach up to Heaven*; for they could not but be ſenſible of the Impracticability of ſuch a Work, becauſe they knew the Height of the late Flood which lifted up the Ark fifteen Cubits above the higheſt Mountain was infinitely ſhort of Heaven; nor was it to be a Refuge from the Waters of another Flood; for God had declared, that no ſuch Deluge ſhould ever be again, *Gen.* ix. 15. But their Deſign was evidently this, according to the ſacred Hiſtorian, *Gen.* xi. 4. *Let us make a Name*, leſt we be ſcattereed abroad, *on the Face of the whole Earth*; that is, "Let "us go about this Work, that "here we may have an abiding "Place, that by erecting this vaſt "City and Tower, we may have "Room enough, and live together "in one Body, make our Luſts our "only Law, and act as we pleaſe, "without the Controul of others; "and that afterwards, when by "Reaſon of the Increaſe of our "Numbers, we muſt be compelled "to remove, we may be known by "this famous Monument; and "when we leave this World, we "may hereby purchaſe a Name in "future Ages, and even ſurvive after "Death.

Thus their Enterprize and Deſign were Prophane and impious, and nothing leſs than an arrogant Contempt of the great God and Father of the Univerſe.

Thus though the Poets, who ever indulged Fancy and Fiction, have interſperſed this Circumſtance, as if theſe daring Sinners had actually ſcaled the Heavens; it muſt be acknowledged, that it gave riſe to their treating on the Subject, and in the Main confirms the Truth of the ſacred Hiſtory.

With Reſpect to the Diviſion of the Earth among the Sons of *Noah*, recorded in the tenth Chapter of *Geneſis*, it is not to be doubted, that the Fiction of dividing the World among three Brethren, the Sons of *Saturn*, was taken from this Circumſtance. Indeed there are ſome Trace

Traces and Remainders of the ſacred Truth to be met throughout the whole Literary Syſtem of the Pagans.

5th, From the Time of the Confuſion of Tongues, and the Diſperſion at *Babel*, to that of the Law being given by *Moſes*, there are many Paſſages atteſted by Pagan Writers. The great Patriarch *Abraham*, according to *Joſephus* and *Euſebius*, is mentioned by divers Writers among the Pagans. *Origen* affirms, that *in the Name of the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, were Words that the Heathen pronounced in their Charms and Spells; nay, he tells us, that thoſe Words, *the God of* Abraham, gave Occaſion to the Pagans to think *Abraham* was ſome God.

It is likewiſe obſervable, that the Pagan Writers make mention of the ſame, or the like Cuſtom, that this Patriarch uſed at making of Covenants, viz. the cutting or dividing of one or more Animals into two Parts, and paſſing between them.

Thus in *Gen.* xv. 9. when God made a Covenant with him, he commanded him to divide a Heifer, a Goat, and a Ram into Pieces, and to paſs between them; whence afterwards this Ceremony was uſed when a League or Covenant was entered into between Man and Man, and the Parties did, as it were, declare by that Action, that they wiſhed to be cut aſunder in the ſame Manner as the Beaſts, if they violated the Covenant into which they entered.

From divers Inſtances in the Old Teſtament, of the frequent and viſible Appearance of God and Angels unto Men, as to *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, *Moſes*, *Gideon*, *Manoah*, and ſeveral others; and from their aſſuming of Bodies in human Forms, in order to this Purpoſe; there aroſe a Notion among the Pagans, that their Gods vouchſafed ſometimes to come down and viſit them in the Likeneſs of Mortals.

Thence *Homer* and other Poets commonly mention the Apparition of the Gods in ſenſible Shapes, and introduce them in that Manner. Thence it was that the People of *Lyſtra*, in the Leſſer *Aſia*, cried out, that *the Gods were come down to them in the Likeneſs of Men*, Acts xiv. 12. and upon this Apprehenſion, they were preparing to offer Sacrifice to them, and the Prieſts were ready, with their Oxen and Garlands for that End.

Again, ſacrificing of Men, eſpecially of their Sons, which ſome Pagan Stories relate, might have its Original from *Abraham*. It is recorded by *Porphyrius*, (ſaith *Euſebius*) that *Saturnus* an ancient King of *Phœnicia*, in order to appeaſe the Gods, and ſave his Kingdom for impending Ruin, offered his only Son upon an Altar.

The conducting of the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, and their miraculous Paſſage through the *Red Sea*, together with the Overthrow of the Egyptians in it, muſt have been known to the Pagans, though they would inſinuate to the contrary.

The Fame of *Moſes* dividing the *Red Sea* was retained among the Gentiles

tiles, as *Diodorus Siculus* teſtifies in theſe Words: "There is a Report "ſpread among the *Ichthyophagi*, a "People inhabiting the Shore near "the Arabian Gulph, (which is the "Name given to the *Red Sea*, among "*Geographers*) namely, that all the "Space where that Gulph is, was "dried up, the Waters being driven "back, but that after the Bottom "had appeared for ſome Time, the "Place by a Reflux of the Sea, was "reduced to its former Condition." Now in this Inſtance he gives a moſt remarkable Teſtimony to the Truth of theſe Words, in *Exodus* xiv. 21. *The Lord cauſed the Sea to go back, and made the Sea dry Land, and the Waters were divided*, and in *Geneſis* 27 and 28. *The Sea returned to its Strength, and the Waters covered the Hoſt of* Pharoah.

The Return of the Iſraelites from *Egypt* is atteſted by *Beroſus*, *Strabo*, and *Juſtin*; the laſt of theſe tells us that *Moſes* who led the people out of *Egypt*, *ſtole from the natives of that Country ſome of their ſacred Things*, which is evidently grounded on thoſe Words we read in *Exodus* xxxi. 21. *They went not out empty, they took with them Veſſels of Gold and Silver, and Garments.*

It is expreſsly atteſted by *Juſtin*, that the Jews travelled in the Deſerts of *Arabia*, and that *Moſes* came to Mount *Sinai*, with other Circumſtances relating to their Travels through that Place; all which are authentic Evidences of the Truth of Scripture-Hiſtory.

6th, The Moſaic Ceremonies are confirmed by the very Practice of the Pagan World. We ſhall inſtance ſome of the moſt particular and momentous, as it would be tedious as well as impoſſible to recount them all, beginning with the dividing of Time into *Weeks*, or ſeven Days, and the obſerving a ſeventh Day as ſacred.

Heſiod calls it *the ſeventh holy Day*, becauſe among the Gentiles, this was a Day of ſolemn Worſhip, ſet apart for religious Offices. It is obſerved of *Severus* the Roman Emperor, that he uſe to go to the Capital, and frequent the Temples on this Day, yea the very Word *Sabbath* was uſed by ſome of them; thus *Suetonius* ſaith, *Diogenus* the Grammarian uſed to hold Diſputations at *Rhodes* on the Sabbath, and from *Lucian* we learn that the ſeventh Day was a Feſtival for School Boys; from thoſe and ſeveral other Inſtances which we may find in *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Euſebius*, it might be proved that the more ſolemn Services of Religion among the Gentiles, and their Ceſſation from Work, were on the ſeventh Day of the Week: Now no wiſe Man will aſſert that this Cuſtom was founded in Nature; for no Light of Reaſon could dictate this Diviſion of Days into juſt ſeven and no more; therefore it is reaſonable to think that the general Agreement of the World in this Calculation, was derived from the Jews, who were particularly ſignalized by their Obſervation of the ſeventh Day, which was enjoined them

them by God himſelf, as in *Exod.* xx. 9. *Six Days ſhalt thou labour, and do all thy Work, but the ſeventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou ſhalt do no Manner of Work, &c.* in other Places the Inſtitution and Obſervation of this particular Day are mentioned; beſides, we might have traced the Origin of this Inſtitution much higher, and found it dated from the very Creation, from the Beginning of all Things, when we read of God's reſting the ſeventh Day, *Gen.* ii. 2. and his bleſſing the ſeventh Day and ſanctifying it, ver. 3. from whence, without Doubt, the Cuſtom among ſeveral Gentiles, of obſerving ſome ſeventh Day in the Week, had its firſt Riſe.

Again, the Gentiles took their ſeveral *Purgations*, *Luſtrations*, and *Purifications*, from the Jews, of which the Books of *Moſes* treat. When the Contents of theſe Writings on the Practice of the Jewiſh People came to be known to the Pagans, they ſoon began to imitate them, and moſt of the Waſhings and Purifyings uſed by the Jews, came to be Part of their Religion.

The Jewiſh Prieſts waſhed their Hands and Feet before they went about their ſacred Office, before they ſacrificed and touched holy Things; and they had in the Temple *Lavers* for that very Purpoſe. Likewiſe they uſed *Aſperſions* or Sprinkling towards others, and were enjoined to cleanſe and purify them from the Defilements which they had contracted. In a Word, every Thing and Perſon belonging to the Jewiſh Service and Worſhip were hallowed and cleanſed by certain Ways of Purification preſcribed by Law.

Hence we read of frequent Waſhings and Sprinklings among the Pagans: *Macrobius* aſſures us, that the *Gentile* Devotioniſts, whenever they addreſſed themſelves to their Gods, whether celeſtial or infernal, prepared themſelves beforehand, by uſing of Water, more or leſs: Hence it became a Maxim among them, that all ſacred Things muſt be ſprinkled with pure Water.

Now theſe Rites of waſhing and purifying bear ſo near a Reſemblance to each other, that we cannot but conclude, the *Gentiles* took them from the *Jews*, or the *Jews* from the *Gentiles*. The latter is by no Means probable, becauſe it is unworthy of God, and the Religion which he initiated among the Jews, to imagine that he would take Example from the Pagans, and make their Religion the Standard of that which he gave to his own People; therefore the former is moſt reaſonable; viz. that the Pagans, by Way of Imitation, took their Ceremonies of Waſhing and Purifying from the Jews.

The *Gentile* Cuſtom of offering firſt Fruits and Tenths was borrowed from the Jews and the Old Teſtament. That it was a general Practice among the Pagan Worſhippers to offer their firſt Fruits to ſome of their Deities, is amply teſtified by *Cenſorinus*; and that the Cuſtom of paying Tythes was as general as ancient, might be proved from the re-

reſpective Hiſtories which ſpeak of this Matter.

This was a conſiderable Part of the Religion of the *Old Romans*, who [as *Plutarch* writes] were wont to beſtow a tenth Part of the Fruits which the Earth yielded them, and of other Goods and Profits, on their ſacred Feaſts, Sacrifices, and Temples, in Honour of the Gods: But this was not every Year, but freely and out of Gratitude, not from any compulſive Law, but an Act of Choice and Deliberation.

This Cuſtom likewiſe prevailed among the *Perſians*, for *Cyrus* (as *Herodotus* writes) offered Tythes to *Jupiter* after a Victory obtained. This might eaſily be proved from other Nations; it was become an univerſal Cuſtom to offer the Tenths to ſome Deity after a ſucceſsful Exploit, as *Servius* ſpeaks: Now this ſacred and religious Rite of dedicating juſt a Tenth to their Gods, is no Law of Nature; though this might put them upon offering Part of their Increaſe to thoſe from whom they thought they received the Whole, yet this particular *Quota* is no Dictate of Nature; therefore this muſt proceed from poſitive Law and particular Inſtitution.

Hence we gather that the Pagans derived this Rite and Cuſtom from the *Jews*, who were under a Law of Tythes by the ſpecial Command of God, as the Scriptures inform us, and thereby receive additional Confirmation.

Abſtaining from certain Kinds of Foods among the Jews may have produced the ſame Cuſtom among other Nations. The Diſtinction of *clean* and *unclean* Meats was derived from the *Jews* to the *Egyptians*.

Thus *Herodotus* and *Plutarch* report, that theſe eat no Swines Fleſh: yea, that they waſhed themſelves if they did but touch it. It is likewiſe affirmed, concerning the *Phœnicians*, *Cretans* and *Syrians*, that they abſtained from this Kind of Fleſh.

The old *Pythagoreans* abſtained from ſeveral Kinds of Food: what God tacitly forbad in Sacrifices, as the Brain and the Heart (for neither of theſe are commanded to be ſacrificed unto God) theſe were openly forbad at their Tables; and they derived from the Hebrews the Cuſtom of abſtaining from Things that died of themſelves, or that had Blood in them.

In many other Inſtances it might be ſhewed, that the Pagans derived ſeveral Rites and Ceremonies from the Jews, but let theſe ſuffice.

Thus have we taken a curſory View of the Moſaic Records, and ſhewn, in divers Inſtances, the Derivation of the Gentiles Philoſophy, Principles, Practices and Cuſtoms, from thoſe ſacred Writings, and conſequently have evinced thereby their Truth and Antiquity.

7th. The Heathens derived the Names of their Gods ſometimes, from the Names and Titles of the one only living and true God.

The Heathens ſeem to have derived ſomething from what the Jews practiſed concerning the *Great Tetragrammaton*, which was called by them

them *Haſhem*, *the Name* emphatically, the *Name appropriate to God*, the inexpreſſible Name; for the Jews tell us, that this Name which we read *Jehovah* was pronounced by the High Prieſt only, and that but once a Year, in the Temple, at the Feaſt of Propitiation, ſo that it was not known to the People how it was pronounced. When they met with it in the Bible, inſtead of it they read *Adonai* or *Elohim*.

But though they ſeldom or never ſpeak of it, this did not proceed from their Ignorance of the true Pronunciation of it, but a Reverence and Fear of prophaning the Word by taking it in their Mouths.

The holy Scripture itſelf warrants the pronouncing of this Name; for in *Gen.* xxii. 14. *Abraham* calls the Place where he would have ſacrificed *Iſaac*, *Jehovah-jireh*.

Now to this Practice of the Jews the Heathens ſeem to refer, when they call him the *unknown God*, and *the God that is not to be named*: and this Name of God (*Jehovah*) is found among the Greeks alſo, though altered and corrupted.

From *Macrobius* we learn, that *Jao* was the chief God of all among the Gentiles, for which he quotes the Oracle of *Apolo Clarius*: *Know this, that the ſupreme God of all is* Jao; a moſt ſignal Atteſtation of the Truth of *Holy Writ*, and the *Great Name* of God contained therein.

8th. The old Teſtament hath left ſome Remains of it in the moſt remote Countries in the World, as we learn from the Account of Travellers. In all theſe Parts there are evidents Tracts of the Hiſtory of the Bible.

Maſtinius, in his Hiſtory of *China* acquaints us, that the *Chineſe* have Records concerning the univerſal Deluge: that in *India*, the Footſteps of the Moſaical Doctrine remain among the *Brachmans*, is proved by *Huetius*, an ancient Divine. The higheſt Mountain of *Zeilan*, an Iſland in the *Eaſt-Indies*, is called by the Inhabitants *Adam's Top*, and there is *Adam's Cave*, where he lamented himſelf after his Fall.

The Ceromony of putting there Hands under one another's Thighs, when they ſolemnly ſwear to each other, of which we read, *Gen.* xxiv. 2. is obſerved among ſome of the *Indians* at this Day.

The *Americans* have Traditions of the Deluge, and mention it in their Diſcourſes. The ancient Patriarchs left behind them Remembrances of their Actions, even in theſe Places; their Memory is ſtill preſerved and retained in many Names, Cuſtoms and Practices, that are among them. The Name of *Joſeph* is often there, and *Hallelujah* is uſed in their Songs.

But let this ſuffice to prove that the Heathens borrowed from Scripture; that their Prieſts took their religious Ceremonies; that their Poets took their Fables; their Hiſtorians, their Narratives; their Philoſophers, their Opinions; and their People in general their Modes and Cuſtoms, from the Writings of the Old Teſtament, and the Doctrines, Rites and Practices

tices of the Jews therein recorded: So that it is evident, that Pagans bear Teſtimony to the Contents of the Old Teſtament, and the prophane Writers, atteſt the Truth and Authority of thoſe ſacred Writings.

We now proceed to ſhew as briefly as poſſible, how the Scriptures of the New Teſtament are confirmed by external Teſtimony; that is, how profeſſed *Pagans* and *Jews*, Enemies to Chriſtianity, have aſſerted the very ſame Things that are related in the Evangelical Writings.

1ſt. There prevailed a general Report about the Time of our Saviour's Birth, and afterwards, that ſome eminent Perſon or Perſons, ſhould ariſe out of thoſe Eaſtern Nations, and be Lord of the World.

The great Politician and Stateſman *Tacitus*, aſſerts this, and would have it fulfilled in *Veſpaſian* and *Titus*, becauſe they were called out of *Judea* to the Empire of *Rome*.

Suetonius agrees with this Author, and tells us, that it was an ancient and conſtant Opinion among the Eaſtern People, that ſome would come out of *Judea* about that Time, and maintain an univerſal Sway over the World.

Joſephus concurs with the Roman Authors in this Opinion, and informs us, that their was a common Rumour among the Jews, that one of their own Country ſhould be veſted with Univerſal Empire; and with the Roman Hiſtorian applieth it to *Veſpaſian*, becauſe he conquered the Jews, and with *Titus* came from *Judea* in triumph to *Rome*.

Other Jews thought this general Notion referred to *Herod*, affirming that he was the Perſon foretold by the Prophets, and the expected *Meſſiah*. Theſe were the *Herodians* mentioned, *Matt.* xxii. 16.

It is manifeſt that this Fame of an univerſal Monarch aroſe from the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, which frequently ſpeak of a great King and Ruler that ſhould come out of the Eaſt, and particularly out of *Judea*.

Out of thee (Bethlehem) *ſhall he come forth unto me, that is, to be the Ruler in Iſrael.* This Prophecy ſpeaks plainly of a Jew, one that by Birth ſhould be of *Judea*; yea, of *Bethlehem*, and therefore it is falſely applied to thoſe Roman Emperors before mentioned, who came not out of *Judea*, but out of *Italy*; not from *Bethlehem*, but from *Rome*.

As for *Herod*, he was not a *Jew*, but an *Idumean*; he was not born in *Bethlehem*, but in *Aſcalon*.

But in our bleſſed Saviour, this Prophecy was fully accompliſhed, he being a *Jew* by Birth, and of the City of *David*, and conſtituted by God, a matchleſs King and Governor over his People.

In many other Places of Scripture this Divine Perſon, who was to come to redeem and ſave Mankind, is ſet forth as a *King*, *a Great Lord*, and *Prince*, one that ſhould bear Sway in the World, and wield his Scepter over all Nations.

Hence this Rumour was ſpread throughout the Eaſt, about the Time of our Redeemer's Nativity. Hence thoſe

thoſe Pagan and Jewiſh Writers before-mentioned, ſpeak of this great Ruler and Monarch, who is no other than the *Lord Chriſt*, the *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* This they had from the Prophecies of the Bible, whence it is ſo often foretold, That a King ſhould ariſe, and gain an univerſal Empire over Mankind.

To this we may refer that which *Suetonius* reports (and he quotes his Author) that a few Months before the Birth of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, there prevailed an univerſal Report, *that Nature was bringing forth a King to the Roman People.* The Senate, alarmed at ſo extraordinary a Report, iſſued as extraordinary a Decree, *that no one born that Year ſhould be nurtured.*

This Report, without Doubt, referred to *Chriſt*, who was born in the Reign of *Auguſtus*; he was the King who was to be born to the World, which was then in a Manner ſubject to the *Roman* Empire, and therefore might be called the *Roman* People.

2d. The *Sibylline* Oracles and Verſes are a ſignal Confirmation of the Authority of the New Teſtament, as in theſe the chief Points relative to our bleſſed Saviour are plainly related by theſe Pagans. They declared in their Writings, that there ſhould be a great Change in the World, and that *a new Governor ſhould ariſe to be very eminent.*

Cicero frequently takes Notice of this Paſſage of the *Sibylls*; and the *Roman* Senate was greatly alarmed at it, leſt their Commonwealth ſhould be turned into a Monarchy.

The following Affirmation is ſufficient to prove the Authority of the *Sibylline* Writings. They tell us in their myſtic Verſes, That a *little Child* ſhould throw down Idolatry with his Hand, and ſtop the Mouths of the *Delphic Dæmons.* This was no other than the Child *Jeſus.*

It is certainly of great Importance, that theſe Writings atteſt the very ſame Things that were predicted in the Old Teſtament, and are recorded by the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts in the New. This Circumſtance eſſentially tends to the Refutation of the Objections and Cavils of the moſt profeſſed Adverſaries of Chriſtianity. Accordingly, the ancient Chriſtians, eſpecially the ancient Fathers, made uſe of theſe Heathen Writings againſt the Heathens themſelves, engaging them with their own Weapons. Theſe Verſes are highly commended by *Athenagoras*, and *Theophilus* of *Antioch*, *Juſtin*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Lactantius*, *Auguſtine*, and divers others too tedious to mention.

In ſhort, theſe Writings afford a clear Teſtimony of Chriſtianity, and its divine Author. The ancient Chriſtians eſteemed them as valid Proofs of the Truth of their holy Religion, and of the New Teſtament, on which it is founded; therefore till theſe Teſtimonials are refuted, every Aſſerter of the Chriſtian Cauſe has a Right to alledge them, as he finds Occaſion.

3. The New Teſtament receives ample Confirmation from Pagan Writers, who atteſt the Name of Chriſt, together with the particular Circumſtances relating to his Birth, Life and Death.

Tacitus, ſpeaking of the Sufferings of the Chriſtians for the firing of *Rome*, which *Nero* laid to their Charge, ſaith, the Emperor inflicted the moſt exquiſite Puniſhments on thoſe Perſons, who, being deteſtable for their Villainies, were commonly called *Chriſtians*, from the Author of that Name, *Chriſt*, *Taci. Annal*, *b.* 15. *Ch.* 44. Here this Hiſtorian expreſly mentions the Name of *Chriſt*, who is the Perſon to which he moſt undoubtedly refers; though, as we learn from *Lactantius*, this Name was ſometimes altered; for that by changing a Letter, they pronounced it *Chreſt*. Thus we read in *Suetonius*, that *Claudius* baniſhed the Jews from *Rome*, becauſe they were always raiſing Tumults, at the Inſtigation of *Chreſtus*.

Pliny the younger mentions the Chriſtians, and Chriſt by Name; for he tells the Emperor, that ſome that were brought before him upon Suſpicion of being *Chriſtians*, were found to be Perſons of another Perſuaſion; for, upon his Solicitation, they refuſed not to *curſe Chriſt*. This was the Appellation by which he was known to the Gentile Hiſtorians, and this is the very Title by which he is emphatically ſtiled in the New Teſtament.

But from the Name, we paſs on to the great and memorable Circumſtances which accompanied the Birth, Life and Death of our bleſſed Saviour.

With reſpect to his Birth, there are four moſt remarkable Things to be attended to; namely, the particular Time of it, the general Tax, the wonderful Star, and the murdering the Infants at *Bethlehem*.

Thoſe known Adverſaries of Chriſtianity, the Jews and Gentiles, teſtify, that Chriſt was to come at that *very Time* when he came. It was the univerſally received Tradition of *Elias*, that after four thouſand Years the *Meſſiah* ſhould be born; for tho' that celebrated Prophecy or Saying in the *Talmud*, of two thouſand Years before the Law, and two thouſand after it, be not exactly true (for there were about two thouſand five hundred Years, from the Creation to the giving of the Law, and from that Time, to the Coming of Chriſt, there were not above ſixteen hundred Years) yet the Prophecy may be uſed to convince the Jews, that the *Meſſias* is come; and it is a plain Indication of the Time when he was expected by them, even that Time when he bleſſed the World with his Preſence on Earth.

Hence it is, that when Chriſt was brought to *Jeruſalem*, to be offered in the Temple, as ſoon as *Simeon* beheld him, he immediately acknowledged him, and cried out, *Mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation*. This is that *Simeon*, to whom the Jewiſh Doctors referred, when they ſaid, the Diſciples

ples of *Hillel* ſhall not fail, till the Meſſiah cometh; for this *Simeon*, called the *Juſt*, was one of the chief of thoſe Diſciples.

It is confeſſed by all the learned Jews, that he was ardently *deſired* and *expected*, not only by that People, but by all Nations, juſt at the Time of his Coming; for this was the great Lord of the World, that was expected out of the Eaſt; this was the Fulneſs of Time when the Son of God was born of a Woman.

Another Circumſtance of Chriſt's Birth, which the New Teſtament takes Notice of, is the Tax that was made by the Appointment of the Emperor *Auguſtus*. *It came to paſs in thoſe Days* (ſaith St. *Luke*) *that there went out a Decree from Cæſar Auguſtus, that all the World ſhould be taxed*, or enrolled, as the Greek Word properly ſignifies. This was no Money-Tax, but only a ſetting down or Enrollment of every Perſon according to Quality, Age, and Station.

The Emperor had Precedents among the old Roman Kings for this; for *Plutarch* tells us that *Numa Pompilius*, and *Florus*, relates, that *Servius Tullius* took an Account of the Age, Family, Patrimony and Offices of the *Romans*, digeſting them into particular Claſſes, and ſetting them down in Tables kept for that Purpoſe.

Now *Auguſtus*, by ſuch a *Cenſus*, or Eſtimate as this, knew the Strength of his Empire, ſo that when there ſhould be Occaſion for a Subſidy, he could take his Meaſures accordingly. Whence it is ſaid, *all the World was taxed*, or enrolled, it is to be reſtrained (though not to *Judea* only, as ſome imagine, yet) to the Roman Empire.

Tacitus, whoſe Authority is unqueſtionable, giveth this ſhort Deſcription of the Books of Taxes, or Enrollment, which were made at the Time when Chriſt was born. "The "publick Revenues were contained in "them; the Number of the Citi-"zens, and their Dependants, that "were in Arms; how many Ships, "Kingdoms, and Provinces there "were within the Compaſs of the "Roman Empire, was exactly re-"giſtered, and conſequently what "Taxes or Impoſitions might be diſ-"penſed with, and what were ne-"ceſſary to be levied in the ſeveral "Parts of the Empire."

All this *Auguſtus* copied with his own Hand. So that we find the Roman and Jewiſh Hiſtories (for *Joſephus* mentions it) agree with the ſacred one, and confirm the Relation of St. *Luke* concerning the Birth of our Saviour.

The next Particular relating to the Birth of Chriſt, was the Appearance of a wonderful Star, *Matt.* ii. 2, 7, 9. which is alſo mentioned by Heathen Writers.

Some think this new Star appeared only to the *Magi*, or Wiſe Men, alledging as the Ground of their Opinion, that otherwiſe *Herod* would not have ſo *diligently enquired* of them concerning its Appearance; becauſe he might have learned that from his own Subjects.

But

But to underſtand this clearly, let us attend to the Words of Scripture, *Matt.* ii. 7. *Then Herod, when he had privily called the Wiſe Men, enquired of them diligently, what Time the Star appeared?* that is, either firſt, what was the Time of its uſual riſing, for it did not appear always Night and Day: Or, ſecondly, perhaps the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, and other *Jews*, did not obſerve it, it being not a great and large one; but the *Magi*, who were ſkilled in the Stars, and obſerved when a new one appeared, knew the Time of its Riſing; therefore *Herod* enquired of them. Or, thirdly, he enquired what was the Time when the Star began firſt to appear.

That this is the true Meaning is evident, from *Matt.* ii. 16, that *Herod ſlew the Children from two Years old and under, according to the Time which he had enquired.*

Herod had been told by theſe wiſe Men, that this had appeared about two Years; therefore he ordered all Children born within that Time to be ſlain. Hence it is evident, that the Time of the Star's firſt Appearance was the Circumſtance about which *Herod* made the Enquiry, and in which he could not be ſatisfied by his own Subjects.

But it does not follow from this, that the Star was not ſeen by them at all, nor by *Herod* himſelf, becauſe his Enquiry was not about the preſent Appearance of it, but only concerning the Time of its firſt Appearance. Beſides, if it was ſeen by none but the *Magi*, it would not have been mentioned in the Writings of the Pagans; whereas the *Sibylls* in their Verſes prophetically ſpeak of it, and *Virgil* tranſcribes the ſame in praiſe of the Emperor *Auguſtus*.

Again, *Herod*'s murdering the Infants of *Bethlehem* is mentioned by prophane Writers, as well as by the Holy Evangeliſt. *Macrobius* recounts not only the Circumſtance of *Herod*'s ſlaying the Children of *Bethlehem*, but his putting to Death his own Son, and adds farther, that when the News was brought to the Emperor of this horrid Tranſaction, he ſarcaſtically replied, *It is better to be* Herod's *Hog than Son.*

Tertullian appeals to the cenſual Tables and publick Acts at *Rome* for the Truth of this Circumſtance, which ſhews that it was well known to thoſe Pagans.

But we paſs on to conſider ſome Tranſactions of the Life of the bleſſed *Jeſus*, which are atteſted by the profeſſed Enemies of Chriſtianity. That one *Jeſus* lived in *Judea* in the Time of *Tiberius*, did great and wonderful Things, and was followed by many of the Jews, as well as acknowledged by them to be the *Meſſiah*, ſent from God, is not diſowned by the greateſt Adverſaries of the Chriſtian Religion.

Celſus, *Julian*, and *Porphyry*, deny not the Miracles wrought by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, as ſeveral of the ancient Fathers aſſure us, they confeſs the Matter of Fact, that he cured the blind and lame, but they aſcribe it to the Power of Magic. In ſhort, they give their Aſſent and Teſti-

Teſtimony to the chief Paſſages of the Evangelical Hiſtory concerning our Saviour; and though they cavil at ſome and ſtrive to confute them, they frankly acknowledge, that there was ſuch a Perſon as *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, in the Reign of the Emperor *Tiberius*, who declared himſelf to be the *Meſſiah*, and ſent from Heaven to redeem and ſave Mankind, and preached thoſe Doctrines that are recorded in the Goſpel, and performed thoſe miraculous Works that are therein related.

This Teſtimony of the Pagans is irrefragable and undeniable; as likewiſe is that of the Jewiſh Writers, who make frequent mention of *Chriſt*, admit that there was ſuch a Perſon, that he lived at that Time in which it is affirmed in Scripture he did, and that his Works were no leſs than miraculous, and beyond the Power of Nature. This the Jews, who lived then, or not long after, report concerning him, as may be ſeen in the *Talmuds*. *Buxtorf* in his *Talmudic Lexicon* hath produced abundant Proofs concerning the Matter of Fact mentioned in the Evangelical Writings, even out of *Talmudic* Authors, which is undoubtedly a Confirmation of the Hiſtory of Chriſt the true *Meſſiah*.

The Death of our bleſſed Saviour, with ſome of the particular Circumſtances attending it, is likewiſe atteſted by Pagan Writers. The great Roman Hiſtorian *Tacitus*, expreſsly confirms this Article of our Chriſtian Faith, that Chriſt ſuffered under *Pontius Pilate*, and that in the Reign of *Tiberius*: See his Annals, Book xv. Chap. 44. *Lucian*, who was noted for his Scoff and Ridicule of the Chriſtian Religion, calls its great Maſter and Founder, *The Man that was faſtened to a Gibbet, and hung upon it in* Paleſtine. The particular Manner of his ſuffering, namely, on the Croſs, is acknowledged both by Jews and Pagans, by the former of whom our bleſſed Lord was called in Deriſion, *He that was hanged.*

The Eclipſe at Chriſt's Paſſion mentioned by the Evangeliſts, is left upon Record alſo by the Heathens. *Dionyſius*, an *Athenian* by Birth, before he was converted to the Faith, when he was a Student in *Egypt*, was an Eye witneſs of this miraculous Eclipſe, which he relates in an Epiſtle, declaring that it was ſeen not only by himſelf, but by *Apolophanes*, who was at the ſame Time with him at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*.

They were both greatly aſtoniſhed, concluding ſome ſtrange Event was ready to befall Mankind, and *Dionyſius* is ſaid to have cried out, "Either "the God of Nature ſuffers, or the "Frame of the World is ready to be "diſſolved."—This is that *Dionyſius* who is called the *Areopagite*, *Acts* xvii. 34. becauſe on his Return home, he was choſen into the Senate of *Areopagus*, and thence acquired the Name; he was afterwards converted to the Chriſtian Faith by St. *Paul*.

Origen in a Diſpute with *Celſus* the Philoſopher proves this Eclipſe at Chriſt's Paſſion out of *Phlegon Trallianus* (one of *Trajan's* freed Men) who was a great Chronologer;

and *Euſebius* mentions the ſame Author, and quotes theſe Words: "In "the fourth Year of the 202d *Olym-* "*piad*, there happened a great De- "fect (or Eclipſe) of the Sun, ſuch "as was never known before. The "Day at the ſixth Hour was turned "into dark Night, that the Stars "appeared in the Heavens." And he adds, "There was an Earthquake at "the ſame Time in *Bithynia*, which "overturned ſeveal Houſes in the "City of *Nice*."

What Account could be more accurate, as Chriſt's Paſſion was in the laſt Year of the 202d Olympiad, which was the 18th Year of the Reign of *Tiberius?* The Hour of the Day mentioned by *Phlegan* plainly ſhews that he relates the ſame Thing with St. *Mark*, who expreſsly affirms the Eclipſe to have happened at the ſixth Hour, *Mark* xv. 33. Beſides, the Earthquake which attended this Eclipſe, is ſaid by the Chronologer to have happened at the very Time, which agrees with the Account of St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, Chap. xxvii. ver. 51. All which proves that this Pagan refers to the very ſame Eclipſe mentioned by the Evangeliſts.

Euſebius cites the very ſame Teſtimony, which is ſtrongly confirmed by *Origen*. This memorable Eclipſe could not be natural, becauſe it happened at a Time when the Moon was full, being on the Day before the Paſſover, which fell on the fourteenth Day of the firſt Month, called *Niſan*, which anſwers to our *March*.

Now as it is contrary to all the Rules of Aſtrology, that the Sun ſhould be eclipſed when the Moon is at the Full, we muſt conclude this Eclipſe to have been miraculous, altogether againſt the Courſe of Nature, and conſequently that it was an extraordinary Exertion of Almighty Power, in Confirmation of the Divinity and Miſſion of the bleſſed *Jeſus*.

With Reſpect to the *Earthquake*, it is probable, that like the *Eclipſe*, it was univerſal, though it proved deſtructive only to ſome particular Places; as in *Aſia*, where, according to the Account of *Pliny*, whole Cities were overturned, to relieve which, *Suetonius* records, that the Emperor remitted their Tribute. Concerning the Earthquake at our Saviour's Paſſion, *Euſebius* quotes the Teſtimony of *Thallus*, and the ſame is alledged as an authentick Witneſs by *Tertullian* and *Origen*.

The laſt Circumſtance attending the Death and Sufferings of the great Redeemer was, the rending the Veil of the Temple. This is mentioned by the Evangeliſts *Matthew*, *Mark* and *Luke*, and confirmed by *Joſephus*, whoſe Teſtimony is as good as can be deſired in this Caſe.

4th. Beſides theſe particular Teſtimonies, there are many general ones to be produced, both of Jews and Pagans, in Confirmation of the Authenticity of the New Teſtament.

The Reſurrection of Chriſt is atteſted both by Pagan and Jewiſh Witneſſes. As other Governors and Deputies of Roman Provinces uſed

to

to ſend to the Emperor and Senate of the moſt remarkable Things that happened in their Provinces, ſo *Pontius Pilate*, Procurator of *Judea*, did the ſame; and his Relation is the more valid, becauſe it is the Teſtimony of the Perſon who condemned our bleſſed Saviour.

His Letter to the Emperor *Tiberius*, ſoon after Chriſt's Death, gave an Account of his Life, Miracles, Crucifixion, and riſing from the Dead; and as publick Acts were reſerved in the imperial Archives, ſo theſe were kept there, whence *Hegeſippus*, an eminent Champion in the Cauſe of Chriſt, made uſe of them againſt the Pagans, as we are informed by *Euſebius*.

Juſtin Martyr tells the Roman Emperors, that an Account of the Death and Sufferings of Chriſt was to be ſeen in the Acts of or under *Pontius Pilate*, and refers them to the ſame, as ſatisfactory and undeniable.

Tertullian, with great Confidence alledges the ſame Records, as a ſufficient Confirmation of the Hiſtory of Chriſt; whereupon a learned Prelate concludes, that this ancient Father found this among the Acts of the Roman Senate, where all Things of this Nature were ſet down.

Now the Crucifixion of our Saviour, and his riſing again, were certainly very conſiderable and remarkable Paſſages; and therefore it is not to be doubted, but that *Pilate*, as Procurator of *Judea*, ſent the Emperor an Account of them.

Tertullian obſerves (and from him *Euſebius*) that *Tiberius* would have put Chriſt into the Number of the Gods, upon *Pilate*'s recounting ſuch marvellous Things concerning him; he referred the Matter to the Senate, deſiring them to rank him among thoſe that were worſhipped and deified; but the Senate refuſed it, becauſe they themſelves did not firſt order and approve it; for it was an old Roman Law, that no God ſhould be ſet up by the Emperor, unleſs firſt approved of by the Senate; ſo that this appears to have been the only Cauſe wherefore they rejected Chriſt from being admitted among the Gods. However, the Emperor ſtill retained the ſame Reverence and Eſteem for Chriſt, and in Honour to him, greatly favoured the Chriſtians, commanding by Edict, that none ſhould accuſe or diſturb them merely for their Religion, and annexing a ſevere Penalty to the Tranſgreſſion of this Edict.

Nay, *Tertullian* and other Fathers aſſure us, that he had ſo great a Reverence for Chriſt, that he intended to erect a Temple to him; and that this aroſe from the Information which *Pilate* ſent him concerning our bleſſed Saviour.

An ancient Hiſtorian reports, that *Alexander Severus* worſhipped our Lord, and held his Picture in great Veneration, and that he had Thoughts of erecting a Temple to him, and taking him into the Number of the Gods.

The ſame Writer affirmeth, that *Adrian*

Adrian intended to have done the ſame, but was prevented, by being told, that in ſuch Caſe all would turn Chriſtians, and the Temples dedicated to the other Gods would be forſaken.

Let theſe then ſuffice as ample Atteſtations of the Pagans concerning the Perſon and Works of our great Redeemer.

On this Occaſion we cannot paſs over in Silence the very remarkable Account of *Joſephus*, who, forty or fifty Years after ſome of the Evangelical Writers, hath this memorable Paſſage, Book 18. Chap. 4. "At "this Time, there was one *Jeſus*, "a wiſe Man, if I may call him a "Man, for he did moſt wonderful "Works, and was a Teacher of "thoſe who received the Truth "with Delight. He brought many "to his Perſuaſion, both of the Jews "and Gentiles.

"This was *Chriſt*, who though "he was, at the Inſtigation of ſome "of the Chief of our Nation, and "by *Pilate*'s Sentence, hung on the "Croſs, yet thoſe who loved him "at firſt, did not ceaſe to do ſo; for "he came to Life again the third "Day, and appeared to them; the "divine Prophets having foretold "theſe and other Wonders of him; "and to this Day there remains a "Sort of Men, who are now called "from him by the Name of Chriſ-"tians."

Both *Euſebius* and *Jerom* alledge this remarkable Teſtimony of *Joſephus* concerning Chriſt (and with much Propriety) as an undeniable Confirmation of the Chriſtian Religion.

The latter of theſe Writers places this Jew among the eccleſiaſtical Writers of the Church, becauſe he ſpeaks of our Saviour with ſuch extraordinary Reſpect.

If ſome Accounts are true, which alledge, that *Joſephus* had before this written againſt *Chriſt*, his Teſtimony is thereby rendered more valid, becauſe it is a greater Argument of the inviſible Power of divine Truth, which wrought ſo wonderful a Change in him.

Again, *Joſephus* confirms the Truth of the Evangelical Hiſtory, by relating ſeveral Things concerning Perſons who are recorded therein. Thus he ſpeaks of the putting *John the Baptiſt* to Death, a Man whom he greatly extols, telling us, Book 18. Chap. 7. "That he was an ex-"cellent Man, and ſtirred up the "Jews to Piety and Virtue, Holi-"neſs and Purity, both of Body and "Soul; and that *Herod* cauſed him "to be killed, becauſe he feared his "Authority would hurt him, and "occaſion a Defection among the "People."

The ſame Author makes honourable mention of St. *James*, whom he calls *the Brother of Jeſus Chriſt*; and relates his Martyrdom, declaring, that the taking away his Life was ſo flagitious a Sin, that in Revenge thereof the Jews were deſtroyed. He fully agrees with St. *Luke* in mentioning *Herod*'s Speech to the People, and their impious Flattery, together with the immediate Judgment inflicted upon this wicked Man, by whoſe

whoſe Command that Apoſtle was put to Death.

It is true, *Joſephus* doth not write that he was eaten of Worms, but the ſame is implied in theſe words, he *was ſeized with a ſudden Pain and Diſeaſe, and died in great Torment of his Bowels*, which without Doubt were devoured by thoſe *Worms St. Luke* ſpeaks of, Acts xii. 23.

Beſides theſe Teſtimonies we might produce ſome concerning St. *Paul*. The Inſurrection mentioned, *Acts* xxi. 38. where we read, that the Tribune of the People ſaid to St. *Paul*, *Art thou not that Egyptian, who before theſe Days didſt ariſe a Tumult, and leadeſt into the Wilderneſs four thouſand Men?*

This is the ſame Circumſtance, with that mentioned by *Joſephus*, more than once, which was begun by an *Egyptian*, who pretended to be a Prophet, gathered together great Numbers of Jews, the Iſſue of which is recorded by this Hiſtorian, Book 20. Chap. 6. and a Confirmation of what St. *Luke* records with Reference to St. *Paul*.

We might alſo add the Inſcription on the Athenian Altar, taken Notice of by St. *Paul*, which wants not the Teſtimony of prophane Writers. This is hinted at by *Lucian*, and *Thucydides* affirms, that there were no leſs than twelve Altars erected in the Market-place of *Athens* with this Inſcription, *To the unknown God*.

But let us paſs on to another Hiſtorical Matter, recorded in the ſacred Writings, viz. The *univerſal Famine* foretold by *Agabus*, *Acts* xi. 28. which according to Pagan Hiſtorians, preciſely happened in the fourth Year of the Reign of *Claudius Cæſar*, and ſpread throughout the World in the ſixth Year.

Dion Caſſius, who compiled his Hiſtory out of the *Faſti* of *Rome*, through the ſeveral Years, ſpeaks of this Famine under that Emperor, and mentioneth his great Care of the City, that the Inhabitants might not be ſtarved.

Suetionus alſo commends him for his Deligence and Forecaſt in furniſhing the City with Proviſion.

Joſephus likewiſe mentions this grievous Famine in the Days of *Claudius* with the ſame particular Circumſtances, which agree with the Account delivered by St. *Luke*, concerning the Relief which was ſent at that Time by the Diſciples at *Antioch*, to the Brethren in *Judea*, that being a Place where the Famine raged exceedingly.

Thus we find the Affirmation of *Euſebius* to be true, who ſpeaking of the dreadful Famine recorded in the *Acts*, telleth us, that even thoſe Writers, who were averſe to the Chriſtian Religion, have recounted the ſame in their Hiſtories.

5th. The Hiſtory of the New Teſtament, or the Goſpel Diſpenſation in general, receives Confirmation from the Account related by a profeſſed Heathen, concerning the Followers of Chriſt, in the Age following, that which he appeared on Earth.

Pliny the younger, writing to *Trajan*, Book 10. Epiſt. 97. gives an Ac-

Account of the Religion and Practice of theſe Perſons; for, being Proconſul of *Bithynia*, in that Emperor's Time, and ſtrictly enjoyned by him to inſpect the Carriage of the Chriſtians, he was particularly careful to inform himſelf of the ſame, in order to fulfill his Maſter's Command and Deſire.

Accordingly he particularly relates how amazingly that Religion ſpread, and increaſed daily in that Province, and that not only great and populous Cities, but even Towns and Villages abounded with its Profeſſors, and that in Proportion to its Prevalence, the Pagan's Worſhip decreaſed.

He teſtifies the Reſolution and Conſtancy of the Chriſtians in their Profeſſion; obſerving that he had ſome Perſons brought before him for Examination, who were accuſed of being Followers of Chriſt; but that he ſoon diſcovered they were no Chriſtians, for on the moſt diſtant Hint of obtaining their Diſmiſſion, they were ready to adore the Emperor's Image, and even to cure Chriſt himſelf, which was a ſufficent Evidence to him that they were not Chriſtians indeed; for he had been informed that Perſons of that Character could not by any Means he brought to renounce their Religion, in which they were ſtedfaſt and immoveable.

He likewiſe gives an Account of the Nature of their public Confeſſions, of the Devotion with which they ſerved God, and alſo that they worſhipped *Chriſt* as ſuch.

The Teſtimony of *Pliny* is confirmed by the Anſwer of the Emperor *Trajan*, in Conſequence of this Repreſentation, wherein he expreſſeth it as his Will and Pleaſure, that theſe Perſons called *Chriſtians* ſhould be no longer under the Inquiſition; that is, that they ſhould not be ſought for and puniſhed, as he was ſatisfied of their moral Character; and that nothing could be alledged to their Charge deſerving of Death.

From this Character and Account which were given at the Beginning of the ſecond Century, by the Emperor *Trajan*, and by *Pliny*, who had perſonal Knowledge of the Chriſtians, we may infer, that they were at firſt according to the Deſcription of the Goſpel, *holy in all Manner of Converſation*; that their Religion increaſed and flouriſhed; that all the Severities which where practiſed upon them, could not draw them from a ſtedfaſt Profeſſion of the Goſpel of Chriſt, and conſequently may aſſure ourſelves, that the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament, deſcribes them in their real Colours, or in other Words, relates a faithful and circumſtantial Account of Chriſtianity.

6. We ſhall conclude with the Teſtimony of that Arch-Infidel *Mahomet*, who in the expreſs Terms of the Alcoran, adds to other Proofs of the Authenticity of the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, The Words are theſe, "The Spirit of God hath "given Teſtimony to *Chriſt*, the "Son of *Mary*, a divine Soul was "put into him. He is the Meſſen-"ger of the Spirit of the Word of "God. His Doctrine is perfect, &c. "Again the Goſpel is called the

"Light

" Light and Confirmation of Truth, " and the right Way to fear God."

The Alcoran likewiſe repreſents the Great Jehovah as ſpeaking in Terms to this Import: " That he " had ſent Chriſt, the Son of Mary, " that he had given the Goſpel to " no other end, than they might " obtain by it the Love and Grace " of God."

In other Places the Miracles of our Saviour are owned and confeſſed to be true.

Thus even the great Impoſtor, and Enemy to Chriſtianity, bears Witneſs to the bleſſed Jeſus, and in ſome degree acknowledgeth the Authenticity of the Goſpel.

CHAP. XIII.

Summary View of the Teſtimonies cited in Vindication of the New Teſtament. A remarkable Objection, impartially ſtated, and fully anſwered.

IN order to ſtrengthen the Chriſtian Cauſe, and build up ſincere Chriſtians in their moſt holy Faith, we have turned over many Volumes of profeſſed Adverſaries, who approve of the chief Things related in thoſe ſacred Writings. The following is a brief Account of the Writers, both Jewiſh and Pagan, who concur in the Confirmation of the grand Point we have laboured to eſtabliſh.

Among the *Jews* we have *Philo*, an excellent *Platoniſt* of *Alexandria*, who flouriſhed ſoon after Chriſt, and lived in the Time of the Apoſtles.

We have *Joſephus*, a Jewiſh Hiſtorian, according to ſome a Prieſt, who wrote about forty Years after, and had great Opportunities of acquainting himſelf with the Chriſtian, as well as the Jewiſh Affairs.

We have the Talmudic Doctors and Writers, ſome of whom lived near thoſe Times, and give their Aſſent to the Matters of Fact recorded in the Goſpel.

Among Pagans, we have their Emperors, *Auguſtus*, *Tiberius*, *Caius Caligula*, *Trajan*, *Adrian*, *Alexander Severus*; likewiſe their Deputy Officers, *Lentulus*, *Pilate*, *Pliny*.

We have their celebrated Hiſtorians, Philoſophers, and their moſt renowned Scholars, as *Pliny*, the Proconſul of *Aſia*, in his Epiſtle. *Cornelius Tacitus*, an eminent Roman Orator and Hiſtorian, in his Books of Hiſtory and Annals. *Plutarch*, a famous Biographer, in ſeveral of his Treatiſes. *Lucian*, in his Dialogues. *Suetonius*, in the Lives of the *Cæſars*: and *Dion Caſſius*, in his Roman Hiſtory.

We have beſides all theſe, four inveterate Enemies to Chriſtianity, *Julian*, *Celſus Porphyrius*, and *Hierocles*, whoſe Writings atteſt the Truth of many Things recorded in the New Teſtament.

We have *Macrobius* (if he may be deemed an Heathen Author) in his *Saturnalia*, and *Lampridius*, in his Lives of the Emperors.

We have their Women alſo, the *Sybils*, whoſe Teſtimony concerning Chriſt is by no Means contemptible.

Laſtly. We have not only the joint

joint Teſtimony of Jews and Gentiles, but of *Mahomet* himſelf. In a Word, we have all the Witneſſes that can be deſired or expected; and all the Evidence and Proof that can be derived from Time, Place and Circumſtance.

But as Blindneſs of Heart and Obſtinacy of Temper, will not admit of the fulleſt Demonſtration, and cleareſt Evidence, after all that has been offered, there remains one Objection, and the only one that we think can be ſtarted; it is this: *Though the remarkable Paſſages already mentioned in the New Teſtament, are related by Jewiſh and Pagan Hiſtorians, yet there are others as remarkable omitted by the ſame Writers; conſequently as they concur not in all, this Teſtimony cannot be deemed upon the whole as valid.* In anſwer to this formidable Objection we offer the following Conſiderations.

1ſt. From a ſhort Space after Chriſt's Nativity, to the eighth Year of his Age, there could be no Hiſtory expected concerning him, becauſe he was all that Time in *Egypt*, therefore nothing is recorded of him during the ſame by the Evangeliſts, and if they are ſilent, we can expect no Account from the Hiſtorians.

When he returned to *Judea*, he lived retired till he was thirty Years old; it is only recorded, that he went to *Jeruſalem* with his Parents, and diſputed in the Temple with the Doctors; ſoon after which he came home to *Nazareth*, and there lived in Obſcurity: therefore there was no Subject for Hiſtory thus far.

After this Time, he was employed but three Years and a Half in the Scene of publick Action, ſo that it is no matter of Wonder that the Jewiſh and Pagan Writers ſay ſo little of our Saviour and the Tranſactions of his Life, when ſo great a Part of it was ſpent in Obſcurity.

2d. It muſt be remembered, that there are many conſiderable Things and Perſons, of which ſome of the Circumſtances before mentioned, are not related by them.

The Obſcurity of the Sun, at *Julius Cæſar*'s Death, is not recorded by any but *Ovid*, *Virgil* and *Pliny*, yet ten Hiſtorians, or more, in the next Age, wrote *Cæſar*'s Life, gave an Account of his fatal End, and of ſeveral Things that followed.

Suetonius wrote the Lives of the firſt twelve Roman Emperors; yet if we compare him with other Authors, we ſhall find that he has omitted many conſiderable Things. Let us now apply this to our preſent Purpoſe; ſuppoſing none of the Heathen Hiſtorians, who have related the Roman Acts, had ſpoken of that famous *Cenſus* or Tax in the Time of *Auguſtus*. Admitting that the Eclipſe at Chriſt's Paſſion had not been taken Notice of (though both Circumſtances are upon Pagan Record) yet it would not have followed from thence that no ſuch Things had happened; for we find it not unuſual with Hiſtorians to paſs by ſome Perſons and Things which are very remarkable and worthy of Record.

If then ſome Things ſpoken by the Evangeliſts are not mentioned in other

ther Hiſtories, we cannot with any Reaſon thence conclude, that the Evangeliſts have recorded what is falſe.

Tacitus, *Valerius Maximus*, and others, have Circumſtances which are not to be found but in their reſpective Writings, and yet they are not ſuſpected of Falſhood; why then may we not credit thoſe Things which the *New Teſtament* records, though they are not mentioned by any Pagan Hiſtorians?

It has already been obſerved of the Evangelical Hiſtorians themſelves, that they do not all record the ſame Things. Thus the Goſpels ſpeak of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, of the *Galileans* and *Herodians*, and yet make no mention of the *Eſſenes*, who were a very conſiderable Sect.

No Hiſtory, ſacred or prophane, relates every Thing; the Evangeliſts themſelves pretend not to this; we muſt not expect to find every Tranſaction of the bleſſed *Jeſus* in their Writings: for one of them, who wrote laſt of all, thus finiſhes his Goſpel, *There are many other Things which Jeſus did, the which if they ſhould be written every one, I ſuppoſe that even the World itſelf could not contain the Books that ſhould be written*, John xxi. 25.

3d. We are to note, that both Jewiſh and Pagan Hiſtorians concealed or miſrepreſented ſome Things out of Deſign.

We read in *Philo* and *Joſephus*, the Character of the *Eſſenes*, that they were devout, induſtrious, benevolent, and, in every Reſpect, worthy Perſons; nor is this Repreſentation partial, there undoubtedly were ſuch People as Jewiſh *Eſſenes*, and *Joſephus* ſuppoſes them to be one of the three Sects of Philoſophers among the Jews. But it is more than probable, that this excellent Character, or all of it at leaſt belongs not to theſe, but to the Chriſtians of *Alexandria* at that Time.

Philo, in his Treatiſe on a *contemplative Life*, when he pretends to deſcribe the *Eſſenes*, writes in Praiſe of thoſe *Chriſtians* converted from Judaiſm, who were under the Tuition and Conduct of St. *Mark*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*: for this Evangeliſt, preaching the Goſpel in *Egypt*, ſettled a Church in that Place.

Euſebius is of Opinion, that what *Philo* writes of the *Eſſenes* is to be underſtood of thoſe primitive Chriſtians, who were under the Diſcipline of St. *Mark*.

Epiphanius and *Chryſoſtom* were of the ſame Opinion, as indeed were moſt of the Fathers.

Now the Jewiſh Writers, for politic Ends, would not give this Account of the *Eſſenes* or *Chriſtians*, but as *Jews*, that the Credit of it might not redound to Chriſtianity, but to their own Religion, and Way of Worſhip.

Pagan Hiſtorians, as well as Jewiſh, omit ſome Things from Deſign, and inſert others that are palpably falſe.

Thus, as hath been well obſerved, *Plin*, the natural Hiſtorian could not be ignorant of the Eclipſe at Chriſt's Paſſion, it being recorded in

the Roman Archives, and he being a diligent Searcher into thoſe Acts; but he would not inſert an Event in his Hiſtory which he knew Princes were deſirous ſhould be concealed. To have mentioned that Prodigy might exalt the Religion of *Jeſus* too much, and the Eclipſe might make it ſhine the brighter, and be more admired and reverenced by the World. For this Reaſon it is highly probable the Heathen Writers neglected to record this Prodigy, as it tended to enhance a Religion ſo oppoſite to their own.

But we ſhall add another very remarkable Inſtance of the Partiality and Miſrepreſentation of Pagan Writers: when the Army of *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus* were ſtreightened for Water, they were ſuddenly ſupplied with Rain, while their Enemies were overwhelmed with Hail and Thunder. *Dion*, *Julius Capitolinus*, *Claudian*, and *Lampridius* mention this Circumſtance, but impute it to the Emperor's own Prayers to *Jupiter*, and the Inchantments of the *Jewiſh* Magicians.

But the plain Truth is, that the Chriſtian Soldiers by their Prayers procured this extraordinary and unexpected Rain for the Relief of their Thirſt, and brought Thunder and Storms upon their Enemies. The relating of this would have reflected too great an Honour upon the Chriſtians, and their Maſter, wherefore the Pagan Hiſtorians would not aſcribe the Wonder to their Prayers, but to thoſe of the Emperor, telling us the very Words he uſed.

But even theſe Enemies to Chriſtianity have not wholly concealed the Truth, for they acknowledge this extraordinary Event, which they impute partly to the Inchantments of Jewiſh Magicians. All who are converſant with this Branch of Hiſtory, know that it is common with Pagan Writers to Miſtake *Jews* for *Chriſtians*; ſo the Jewiſh Magicians here are no other than the Chriſtians in that Army, who becauſe they brought to paſs ſuch wonderful Things, are ſaid to have been Inchanters and Magicians.

Theſe pious Chriſtians were employed in the Expedition againſt the *Germans* and *Samaritans*, and when the Army was ready to periſh with Thirſt, obtained by their effectual Prayers a great Shower of Rain for themſelves, and deſtructive Thunder and Lightning on the Enemy's Camp, and thereby procured the Victory, whence the Emperor acquired the Titles of *Germanicus* and *Sarmaticus*. This is alledged in the Cauſe of Chriſtianity by *Apollinaris* in his Apology to the Emperor, as *Euſebius* teſtifies.

This is mentioned by *Tertullian* as a Thing every were known, in his Apology to the Senate, and he affirms that the Emperor's own Letter ſent them out of *Germany* acknowledged the ſame, *viz.* that God wrought a Miracle for the Sake of the Chriſtians who were in his Army, and that he owed the Victory entirely to their Addreſſes to Heaven.

Euſebius obſerves farther, that the Emperor hereupon recalled his Edicts againſt

againſt the Chriſtians, and by a new Decree appointed a ſevere Puniſhment to be inflicted on their Accuſers. The Gentile Hiſtorians omit this Circumſtance, and will not impute this miraculous Event to the Interpoſition of divine Providence in the Behalf of the Chriſtians. A Victory gained by the Prayers of Chriſtians would have been too ſignal a Teſtimony of the Truth and Prevalence of Chriſtianity, therefore it is ſuppreſſed.

For the ſame Reaſon, we may juſtly conclude, Chriſt's Miracles are omitted in *Pagan* Hiſtory, for by recording theſe, they would enforce Chriſtianity and invalidate their own Principles. Beſides, ſome of them were afraid to own the Miracles of *Jeſus* and his Followers, becauſe theſe Men were perſecuted and put to Death; or where this was not the Caſe, they feared to incur the Diſpleaſure of the great and powerful.

Thus when it was reported by the *Sybiline Oracle*, the Year before the Birth of *Chriſt*, that *Nature did then bring forth a King into the World*, the *Roman* Senate thereupon ordered that no Child born that Year ſhould be brought up, as appears in *Suetonius*.

Now this was ſufficient to check the Roman Hiſtorians, ſo that it is not to be wondered, that the killing of the Children at *Bethlehem* by *Herod*'s Command is not mentioned by any but the Evangeliſts, (*Macrobius* excepted) as that Act carried with it the Authority of an Edict of the *Roman* Senate.

4thly. It muſt be conſidered, that the Chriſtian Religion, and the Profeſſion of it, were generally deemed by prophane Writers, as very contemptible, ſo that ſome of theſe ſcorned to record thoſe Things which had any Relation to them.

Hence it is, that the Miracles of Chriſt, and other Things appertaining to Chriſtianity, are not ſo much as mentioned. They could not vouchſafe to record ſuch deſpicable Subjects, which ſome of them accounted as merely fabulous. For this Cauſe, it cannot be expected that the *Roman* Hiſtory ſhould contain the Particulars of the Chriſtian, unleſs when War and Tumults ſuppoſed to be cauſed by them occaſioned thoſe Writers to mention ſome Circumſtances to the Aggrandizement of the *Roman* Name.

5thly. Prejudice, Hatred, and Malice, may be aſſigned as juſt Cauſes, wherefore ſome of the moſt remarkable Paſſages in the Evangelical Hiſtory are not mentioned by Pagan or Jewiſh Writers. It is not to be wondered that *Valerius Maximus*, who collected the memorable Acts of other Nations as well as of *Rome*, and dedicated them to *Tiberius*, hath omitted both the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Acts.

His Averſion to the Chriſtian Religion may ſolve this Point, unleſs it be ſuppoſed that Chriſtianity was in its Infancy at the Time when he wrote, and therefore that he had not Materials for compiling that Part of Hiſtory. But this cannot be ſaid of *Tacitus*, who lived in the next Age,

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and was an Enemy to the Chriſtians, as appeared from his Severity towards them in his Writings, ſo that he cannot be thought to have been prejudiced in their Favour.

Suetonius was bitter in his Invectives againſt them, and therefore no impartial Account can be expected from him. The ſame may be ſaid of *Lucius* and *Pliny*, who though they deliver ſome Truths (and thoſe not inconſiderable ones) concerning the Chriſtians, yet their Averſion to them and their Religion would not permit them to ſpeak what they knew concerning them.

Plutarch, of all that lived and wrote about that Time, was the moſt candid to the Chriſtian Religion, which inclined *Theodoret* to think he was almoſt a *Chriſtian*; but the Reſt had ſuch an Averſion to the Chriſtians, that their very Name was odious to them; hence when they ſpeak of Chriſtians or Chriſtianity, they never fail to miſrepreſent or calumniate both.

Chriſtians by them are deſcribed as ſuperſtitious, flagitious, and profligate; nay, as diabolical and the moſt execrable People under Heaven. It is not then to be wondered that ſuch have miſrepreſented many Paſſages which relate to the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and falſified all Reports concerning them.

This therefore is one grand and principal Reaſon, why Pagans are defective in their Hiſtorical Accounts, and why many Things ſpoken of by the Evangeliſts are not mentioned by them, or vilely miſrepreſented. This is undoubtedly the Cauſe why ſo few of the Tranſactions of the bleſſed *Jeſus* are noticed, and why thoſe that are, are ſo miſerably perverted. Prejudice and Envy, Spleen, and Malice, are the Source of all the Injuries, which theſe Writers may have done to the Chriſtian Cauſe.

6thly. We may add, that according to the Teſtimony of many learned Men, divers Pieces of Hiſtory are loſt, whence it is that many Occurrences with which we meet in the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, are not to be found in the Writings of the Pagans. The ſtupendous Acts of our bleſſed Lord, and the important Tranſactions of the Age in which he was born are not to be found upon Record.

All *Dion*'s Hiſtory, for the Space of ten Years, that is five Years before the Birth of Chriſt, and five after it, are loſt, as is *Livy*'s Hiſtory of that Time. In vain therefore do we ſearch for the remarkable Circumſtance relative to Chriſt's Birth in thoſe Writers.

Laſtly. Let it be obſerved, that there are two of the moſt celebrated Roman Hiſtorians, from whom we can expect nothing that has Relation to Chriſt's Birth, or the great Occurrences that happened about that Time. Theſe are *Livy* and *Tacitus*, the former wrote but to the Beginning of the Reign of *Auguſtus*, which was before Chriſt, for which Reaſon no Man can reaſonably think, that thoſe extraordinary Concomitants of our Saviour's Nativity, as the *general Taxation*, and the Appearance of the Star could be recorded by this Hiſtorian.

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With Reſpect to *Tacitus*, there is as little Reaſon to expect any of theſe Circumſtances in his Writings, becauſe he goes not ſo far back as the Reign of *Auguſtus*. His Annals begin with *Tiberius*, and continue to the Death of *Nero*; and his Books of Hiſtory begin where his Annals end, and proceed to the Concluſion of *Titus Veſpaſian*'s Expedition againſt the Jews.

Florus is but an Abbreviator of *Livy*, and therefore we can look for nothing there. As for *Juſtin*, who flouriſhed in the Time of *Antoninus Pius*, he was only an Epitomizer of *Trogus Pompeius*, and goes no farther than he went, therefore we cannot expect any Thing from him concerning the State of the Chriſtians.

Thus we ſee what we may reaſonably expect from theſe Hiſtorians, and thus we may derive ample Reaſon, wherefore ſo few Things that refer to the Hiſtory of the Goſpel are recorded in Pagan Writers. But all that can be reaſonably expected is recorded, as we have ſhewn before, by the beſt Hiſtorians among the Pagans.

Theſe are the ſeveral Conſiderations which we undertook to offer, and we preſume they will fully ſatisfy the Scruples, and anſwer the Objections, that have been or may be ſtarted, as well as abundantly prove, that we have a ſufficient Teſtimony from *Pagan* and *Jewiſh* Writers concerning the Goſpel Hiſtory. This Propoſition is evident, that the New Teſtament is confirmed by prophane Writers, that the Eccleſiaſtical Records are atteſted by the Authority even of thoſe *who were without*. Theſe have tranſmitted to us many of thoſe Things which are regiſtered by the holy Evangeliſts, the Memoirs of theſe Things are in prophane Hiſtory, in the Writings of thoſe Men that oppoſed the Chriſtian Religion.

Thus we have finiſhed what we propoſed, which was, to prove the the Truth and Authority of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Teſtament, from the Truth and Atteſtation of Strangers and Enemies. We have endeavoured to ſhew that the Confeſſion of our Adverſaries agree with that of our beſt Friends. We appeal both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that theſe bear Witneſs to the ſacred Writings, and their Witneſs cannot be rejected by any reaſonable Perſon, becauſe a Teſtimony is leaſt to be ſuſpected when it comes from an Enemy, yea rather becauſe ſuch a Teſtimony is reputed firm and ſolid, worthy of being believed, and deemed valid for the Confirmation and Eſtabliſhment of the Truth.

This then renders the Books of the Old and New Teſtament worthy of all Acceptation. viz. that they are vouched by profeſſed Adverſaries, which is the great Point we have been urging, that Jews and Pagans teſtify the ſame Things which the inſpired Writers deliver.

This is a powerful Confirmation of the Truth of theſe holy Books, this is a clear Demonſtration that they are not forgot, but that the Subjects contained in them are real and cer-

tain, that they give a juſt and faithful Account of the Things on which they treat; in ſhort, that they are the Word of Truth, and indicted by the Spirit of Truth.

CHAP. XIV.

Summary of Chriſtian Theology. General Rules to be obſerved in the explaining of Scripture. Practical Improvement of the important Subject.

CHRISTIAN Theology or Divinity, is the Science which, from Revelation, teacheth the Knowledge of God, namely, his Nature and Perfections, his Relation to us, his Ways and Diſpenſations, his Will with reſpect to our Actions, and his Purpoſes with reſpect to our Being, in order to form in our Minds right Principles for our Directions and Comfort, and to prepare us for the everlaſting Participation of thoſe Bleſſings which alone can ſatisfy the Deſire of the immortal Soul.

In natural Religion we take our Proofs from the Nature of Things as perceived, conſidered and compared by the human Mind; but now we advance upon the Authority and Senſe of Writings and Books, viz. the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, acknowledged by the whole Chriſtian World, as a true Revelation from God, and as a Standard of Truth and Doctrine.

That God ſhould reveal to us, by ſuch Ways as he in his Wiſdom judged moſt proper, ſuch Things as are needful for us to know and do, for the Improvement and Happineſs of our Nature, is perfectly agreeable to his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, who is our Father, and delighteth in our Well-Being; and is alſo perfectly ſuitable to our Circumſtances, as Mankind are ignorant and weak, and very liable to Error and Deception.

It is agreeable to the Nature of Things, that a Father ſhould inſtruct his Child; and that Perſons of Knowledge and Learning ſhould teach the Ignorant. How much more then, that God, whoſe Uunderſtanding is infinite, whoſe Wiſdom ſurpaſſes the Comprehenſion of finite Minds, and without whom we can know nothing at all, ſhould teach and inſtruct the Children of Men.

That his Inſtruction ſhould be conſigned to Writing, is alſo very neceſſary; as this, in fact, is the ſureſt Method of preſerving them in the World.

Tradition from Generation to Generation, is no ſafe Method of Conveyance; the Experiment hath been ſufficiently tried in the Ages before the Flood; wherein, though Tradition was then greatly favoured by the Longevity of Mankind, yet we find that both the Religion of Nature, and traditionary Revelation, were both ſo far loſt, that in the Space of one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty-ſix Years, *the Earth was filled with Violence*; for all Fleſh had corrupted his Way upon the Earth; and both would have been entirely loſt, had not

not God in an extraordinary Manner interpoſed.

The Benefit of Revelation is very great; but then it muſt be faithfully uſed, otherwiſe it will be turned againſt itſelf, and made the Patron of Falſhood and Deluſion, which in fact hath been the Caſe; Men, either weak or wicked, have perverted it, and reduced it to a Subſerviency either to their Luſts or pre-conceived Opinions.

The latter was remarkably the Caſe in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity; when any of the Philoſophers were converted to the Chriſtian Profeſſion, they generally brought with them Schemes and Notions of the particular Sects to which they were attached; theſe influenced their Minds in the Study of the Scriptures, and inclined them to wreſt the ſacred Writings into a Conſiſtency with their pre-conceived Opinions.

Hence it is that many Notions inconſiſtent with the Word of God, and with each other, have been handed down to us from the earlieſt Times, under the ſacred Character of ſound Chriſtian Doctrine.

In theſe our Days we find Men pleading the Authority of Scripture for a Variety of oppoſite and contradicting Sentiments, which therefore cannot all of them be founded on Scripture: For the Holy Scriptures being a Revelation from God, the moſt perfect and unvariable Standard of Truth, though written by different perſons, living in remote Ages, during the Space, as before obſerved, of fifteen hundred Years from *Moſes* to *John*, who wrote the Revelation from God, muſt be perfectly conſiſtent in all their Parts and Principles, Views and Sentiments, expreſſed in uniformity of Language; for if the Language were multiform and various, the Senſe would neceſſarily be obſcure, and the Underſtanding confounded, and ſo the End of Revelation would be defeated.

But on the other Hand, if, notwithſtanding the great Changes in Cuſtoms, Diſpoſitions, Intereſt, and Religious Sentiments, which muſt, and actually did happen in ſo long a Time, we do find that one conſiſtent Scheme, in one conſiſtent uniform Language, is carried on in all the Writings which compoſe the Scriptures, we may ſtrongly conclude that they are a Revelation from God; not the Produce of human Wiſdom, which could never, in Ages ſo remote, and far the greateſt Part ſo illiterate, have continued to carry on a regular, uniform Scheme of religious Principles and Sentiments in the ſame Language or Modes of Expreſſion, but the Inſpiration or Dictates of one Spirit, the Spirit of God. Hence it follows,

Firſt, That in explaining the Scriptures, Conſiſtency of Senſe and Principles ought to be ſupported in all the ſeveral Parts thereof; and that if any Part be ſo interpreted as to claſh with any other, we may be ſure ſuch Interpretation cannot be juſtified. Nor can any Errors be rectified, but by faithfully comparing Scripture with Scripture, and bringing what may ſeem to be obſcure into

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to Conſiſtency with what is plain and evident.

2d. The Senſe of Scripture can no otherwiſe be underſtood than by underſtanding the Force and Import of Scriptural Language; and the force and Import of Scriptural Language can be ſettled in no Method more authentic than by collecting the ſeveral Paſſages in which any Phraſe or Expreſſion occurs. Thus in every View Scripture is the beſt Interpreter of Scripture.

3d. Figurative Expreſſions ſhould be carefully diſtinguiſhed from thoſe that are literal, and it ſhould be always remembered, that the oriental, and conſequently the Scriptural Tropes and Figures, are very bold and different from the European.

4th. Single Sentences are not to be detached from the Places where they ſtand, but to be taken in Connection with the whole Diſcourſe. The Occaſion, Coherence and Connection of the Writing, the Argument that is carrying on, and the Scope and Intent of the Paragraph, are to be carefully attended to.

5th. We ſhould always interpret Scripture in a Senſe conſiſtent with the Laws of natural Religion; or, in other Words, with the known Perfections of God, and the Notions of Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, which are diſcoverable in the Works of Creation, and in the preſent Conſtitution of Things. The Language of Nature is moſt certainly the Language of God, the ſole Author of Nature; and however the divine Wiſdom may diverſify the Circumſtances of ſupernatural Revelation, yet the Law of Nature, as it is founded on the unchangeable Nature of Things, muſt be the Baſis and Groundwork of every Conſtitution of Religion which God hath erected. Whence it follows, that the Study and Knowledge of Natural Religion is a neceſſary Introduction to the Study and right Underſtanding of Revelation.

But here let it be obſerved, we would not by any Means inſinuate, that the Law or Religion of Nature is commenſurate to Revelation; or that nothing is to be admitted in Revelation, but what is diſcoverable by the Light of Nature, or by human Reaſon; ſo far from that, that the whole of Revelation, properly ſo called, could never have been diſcovered by human Reaſon.

From hence it follows, that in Matters of pure Revelation, it is a very falſe and fallacious Way to begin firſt with what our Reaſon may dictate and diſcover; becauſe our Reaſon, unaſſiſted by Revelation, in ſuch Caſes can diſcover nothing at all.

For Inſtance, the Conſequence of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion upon his Poſterity; the Covenant made with *Abraham*; the Nature and Miſſion of the Son of God; the Grant of Bleſſings and of eternal Life through him, concerning theſe Things, we could have known nothing had not God revealed them to us.

Now therefore, in ſuch Matters of pure Revelation, the firſt Thing we have to do, is to enquire, not what human Reaſon can diſcover, but what

what God has diſcovered, and declared in Scripture; though at the ſame Time it is true, that God has diſcovered nothing in Scripture inconſiſtent with what he has diſcovered in the Nature of Things expoſed to the View of all Mankind; therefore, if we underſtand any Thing in revealed Religion, in a Senſe contradictory to natural Religion, or to the known Perfections of God, and the common Notions of Good and Evil, which he hath written upon all our Hearts, we may be certain we are in an Error, and miſtake the Senſe of Revelation.

6th. He who would effectually ſtudy the Word of God, ought, above all Things, to be deeply ſenſible of the infinite Value of true Knowledge and Wiſdom; and how abſolutely neceſſary it is to his eternal Happineſs, to cultivate and improve his intellectual Power, in the Uſe of all thoſe Means, which God hath put into his Hands.

The Scriptures are given us, not for Amuſement or meer Speculation, in peruſing the curious Remains of Antiquity, the Language, Manners, and Theology of ſome celebrated Ancients; but they are all, from the Beginning to the End, pointed directly at our Hearts and Lives, to make us wiſe unto Salvation. There we find every Rule of the moſt conſummate Wiſdom, and every Principle of Truth and Comfort; the Whole is deſigned to refine our Nature into its proper Excellence; to guide us into the Paths of Purity, Peace, and Righteouſneſs; to make us happy in ourſelves, and a Bleſſing to all about us, and finally to qualify us for the full Enjoyment of God for ever.

But if we are cold and indifferent to any Attainments in true Wiſdom; if we chuſe to trifle away the important Seaſon of Life, deſpiſing the glorious Advantages we enjoy, while we eagerly purſue the low and tranſitory Things of this World, in Neglect of ourſelves, of God, and Immortality, of all that is truly great and good, we ſhall receive little or no Advantage from any Explication of the Holy Scriptures. In ſuch Caſe, we ſhall value or reliſh them, we can have no Ground to expect the divine Bleſſing to aſſiſt our Studies, but have Reaſon to fear we ſhall be left to ourſelves to wander from God, from Truth, and Life, in deplorable Ignorance and Folly.

Attend therefore to the Voice of divine Wiſdom, *Prov.* ii. 1, *&c. My Son, if thou wilt receive my Words, and hide my Commandments with thee, and apply thine Heart unto Underſtanding; if thou crieſt after Knowledge, and lifteſt up thy Voice for Underſtanding* (as we do for thoſe Things which we moſt of all deſire, and moſt of all ſtand in need of;) *if thou ſeekeſt her as Silver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hidden Treaſure* (as covetous Men ſeek Money, and ranſack the whole World for the Treaſure in which they delight;) *then ſhalt thou underſtand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God*, which of all Underſtanding is infinitely the moſt excellent.

7th. But this Senſe of the Value of divine Knowledge, and this Deſire to obtain it, muſt be underſtood in a Connection with a ſincere Endeavour to live agreeable to it; for ſhould a Perſon, under the greateſt Advantage of Learning, and with the utmoſt Aſſiduity, ſtudy the Scriptures, he will be, after all, but a poor Proficient in divine Knowledge, if he brings it not home to his Heart, and reduces it not to Practice.

It is not Speculation, but Practice and Experience, which render a Man truly wiſe and knowing, he is the Man who lives wiſely and virtuouſly. *If ye continue in my Word* (ſaith our Lord, John viii. 31.) *then ſhall ye know the Truth, and the Truth ſhall make you free* (from the Darkneſs of Ignorance and Error, and the Servitude of abſurd Luſts and Paſſions.) *Job.* vii. 7. *If any Man will do his* (God's) *Will*, he ſhall know of the *Doctrine whether it be of God*; that is, he ſhall ſee it with true Light, and be convinced that it is perfectly Divine; for *Pſalm* xxv. 14. *The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, and *he will ſhew them his Covenant.*

This may ſuffice to make us ſenſible, that a ſincere Deſire of true Knowledge is a neceſſary Diſpoſition for entering upon the Study of the Scriptures, and that Obedience to God's Command, in the Courſe of a pious Life, is neceſſary to enlarge and eſtabliſh the Judgment in the Knowledge of divine Truths.

8. To the effectual Study of Scripture, it is neceſſary that our Minds and Hearts be unbiaſſed, unprejudiced, open to the Truth, and always diſpoſed to diſcern and receive it.

If the Mind is under the Power of Prepoſſeſſion and Prejudice, we cannot be well diſpoſed for ſearching the Scriptures. For Inſtance, if a Perſon in Matters of Religion and Conſcience is ambitious to gain Reputation in the World, or ſolicitous to pleaſe and recommend himſelf to a Party; how ſhould he ſtudy the Word of God with the ſincere and ſingle View of diſcovering and embracing the Truth, when all his Care is to find what will pleaſe his Fellow-Creatures, and ſuit his own mean and ſelfiſh Purpoſes? *John* v. 44, *How can ye believe, who receive Honour one of another?* That is, whoſe ruling Principle is the Deſire of temporal Honour, and the Favour of Men, who ſeek not the Honour of God alone, the Honour of a good Conſcience, and of an upright Conduct?

Likewiſe, if we reſign our Reaſon and Conſcience implicitly to human Deciſions, or imbibe the Bigotry of a Party, or an invincible Attachment to any Syſtem, without conſidering or examining how far they are agreeable to the Word of God, we are no longer at Liberty to diſcover the Truth.

It is owing to this malignant Cauſe that great Numbers of learned Men, who call themſelves Chriſtians, will not allow themſelves to make any Enquiry, whether the Worſhip of Saints, Images, Relicks, Bread, and innumerable other abſurd Doctrines and ſuper-

ſuperſtitious Practices, are agreeable to the Truth and Purity of the Chriſtian Religion.

The Error and Iniquity of this Conduct in Papiſts we ſee and deteſt; but the ſame moral Cauſe will, in all Caſes, produce the ſame Effects. If we act upon the ſame Principles, if we indulge the ſame Prejudices, and in the ſame Manner wilfully ſhut our Eyes, we ſhall be more faulty than Papiſts, becauſe it is abſolutely repugnant to our Profeſſion as Proteſtants, and ſhall be equally incapable of ſeeing the Truth and Glory of our holy Religion.

In ſtudying the Scriptures we ſhould always keep our Minds open to Evidence, and further Diſcoveries of Truth, which is the only Way to be more and more ſolidly eſtabliſhed in our religious Principles; for in no other Way can we *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Laſtly. Devout and fervent Prayer to God, the Father of Lights, the Fountain of all Illumination, the adorable Being, from whom cometh every good and perfect Gift, is eſſentially neceſſary to the ſucceſsful Study of the Scriptures. *Prov.* ii. 6. *The Lord giveth Wiſdom; out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge, and Underſtanding.*

Nor hath he appointed any Means, how excellent ſoever in themſelves, which exempt us from a Dependance on his Bleſſing. All our Springs are in him, and his gracious Influence renders our Endeavours ſucceſsful; therefore when we apply ourſelves to the Study of the holy Scriptures, we ſhould make our Supplications to God, that he would *open our Eyes, that we may behold wonderous Things out of his Law*, or, in the Apoſtle's Words, *Eph.* i. 17, 18, *That the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Glory, would give unto us the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him, that the Eyes of our Underſtanding, being enlightened*, we may have juſt Apprehenſions of the Riches of his Wiſdom and Grace, and that our Hearts may be duly impreſſed with a deep and laſting Senſe of them.

Thus ſhall we grow from Strength to Strength, and from Grace to Grace, till we ſhall be prepared for that Glory which is to be revealed hereafter.]

PRACTICAL

PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT

on the foregoing IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

HAVING thus deſcanted at large on the Scriptures in general, and laid down ſuch a Syſtem of Divinity as appears to us founded on the infallible Word of God, we would now, by way of Concluſion, endeavour to point out the beſt Improvement of this intereſting Subject.

1ſt. From the Excellence and Importance of the Scriptures, we may infer our Obligation to be thankful for them. As our natural Light and Faculties demand our Gratitude and Thanks, that God has made us wiſer than the Fowls of Heaven, and taught us more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and as our Joy and Praiſe will be agreeable to our Illumination, when in God's heavenly Light we ſhall ſee glorious and eternal Light; ſo the ſuperior Inſtructions and Diſcoveries of Revelation challenge our ſincere Thanks to our wiſe and beneficent Father, who has employed his Spirit at ſundry Times and in divers Manners, to pour Knowledge and Light into the Darkneſs of the Nations, which otherwiſe would in Effect have been abſorbed in Darkneſs and Ignorance; and that at length he has viſited us with the Day-Spring from on high, even a full Diſplay of his heavenly Grace in the everlaſting Goſpel.

2d. We ſhould maintain a juſt, that is to ſay, the very higheſt Eſteem for the Word of God, as contained in the Scriptures.

If it is true, *that all Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, Reproof, Correction and Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*, then certainly we cannot prize it too highly.

The Things of this World, which are very imperfect and tranſitory, poſſeſſes, alas! too large a Share of our Hearts; but the Holy Scriptures are a Treaſure of heavenly and everlaſting Riches, and it is but reaſonable we ſhould give them the Preference, to what we know is infinitely ſuperior in Point of Worth and Excellence. Upon this Foundation of their Value and Importance, the wiſeſt and beſt of Men have repreſented them as the higheſt Object of our Delight and Eſteem. *Pſ* xix. 7,—10. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul; the Teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the Simple. The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the Heart: More to be deſired are*

are they than Gold; ſweeter alſo than Honey and the Honey-Comb. Then only can we call ourſelves happy, when we have attained the ſame Opinion of, and Delight in, the good Word of God.

3d. We muſt not on any Account allow ourſelves to think with Indifference of the divine Word, ſo as to treat it with Irreverence. The Worth and infinite Importance of Revelation will not admit of a cool and languid Thought; it is too ſacred and divine to allow any Degree of Contempt. It is with ſome deemed an Inſtance of Wit and Humour to introduce Scripture Phraſes into common Converſation, and to provoke Mirth, by quoting the Bible. But ſurely this is a moſt ſcandalous Practice, and nothing leſs than burleſquing the Word of God, and raiſing a Laugh at the Expence of the greateſt Bleſſing of Heaven.

Such prophane Levity will by Degrees leſſen the Reverence we have to the Word of God, and deſtroy all ſerious Regard to it; which is, in Effect, to deſtroy ourſelves; and therefore ſhould not only be carefully avoided, but be deteſted with the utmoſt Abhorrence. To preſerve our Reſpect for the Word of God we ſhould,

4thly, Guard our Minds againſt Deiſm, on the one Hand, and Popery on the other.

The Deiſt will perſuade you, Revelation is unneceſſary, and conſequently, that the Scripture is no Revelation from God, but a Cheat, at firſt invented, and afterwards ſupported by thoſe who find their Account in it. He racks his Invention to ſtart any Difficulty or Objection, to prove that the Bible is not ſufficient to the Purpoſes of Revelation.

Here indeed the Romaniſt joins him, tho' they proceed by different Meaſures; the former, as he pretends to the meer Religion of Nature, and the latter to the Authority of the Church, and a living infallible Guide upon Earth.

Both theſe ſtart from the ſame Point, and it is much to be feared they will meet and unite again in proceſs of Time; for where Deiſtical Principles prevail in a Family, the riſing Generation muſt grow up in great Ignorance of Revelation, and the true Worſhip of God, and will by that Means be expoſed to the Artifice of the Seducer, who lies in wait to deceive.

For this Reaſon there is too much Ground to apprehend that the Spread of Deiſm will, in a few Ages, produce a large Increaſe of Popery among us; for Confuſion and Ignorance of any kind, is a proper Foundation for them to work upon.

The Deſign of this Work is to ground thoſe who have embraced the Proteſtant Faith, againſt ſuch as would raiſe Scruples and Prejudices in their Minds againſt Revelation, and without deſcending to Particulars, we may aſſure ourſelves, that whoever cavil againſt the Scriptures, are Strangers to them.

They object, and take upon themſelves to judge in a Matter in which they are not qualified to be Judges;

in a Matter which they neither underſtand, nor in their preſent Way of thinking, even intend to underſtand; for whatever Shew they make of Knowledge and Wiſdom, thoſe Men have never ſtudied the Scriptures; nor, generally ſpeaking, have they Learning or Capacity to enter into their abſtruſe and deep Parts.

Had they ſoberly and ſeriouſly ſtudied the Scriptures, they muſt of neceſſity have found ſo many, and ſuch evident Diſplays of the divine Wiſdom, Power, and Truth of God, as would have taught them to think more modeſtly of what is doubtful and obſcure.

When do we hear of any Name illuſtrious for Learning and Wiſdom, who profeſſed to have ſtudied the Scriptures, that ever diſputed their divine Origin and Authority?

The famous *Selden*, one of the moſt eminent Philoſophers and moſt learned Men of his Time, who had taken a diligent Survey of Antiquity, and what Knowledge was conſiderable among the Jews, Heathens and Chriſtians, and read perhaps as much as any Man ever read, towards the Cloſe of his Life, declared to Archbiſhop *Uſher*, "That notwithſtanding he had been ſo laborious in his "Enquiries, and curious in his Collections, and had poſſeſſed himſelf of a Treaſure of Books and "Manuſcripts, upon all ancient Subjects, yet he could reſt his Soul on "none but the Scriptures; and above all, that Paſſage gave him "the moſt Satisfaction, *Titus*, Ch. "2. from the 11th to the 14th Ver. "as comprizing the Nature, End "and Reward of true Religion."

Sir Chriſtopher Hatton, a great Stateſman, a little before his Death, adviſed his Relations to be ſerious in ſearching after the Will of God; for, ſaid he, "It is deſervedly accounted "a Piece of excellent Knowledge, "to underſtand the Law of the "Land, and the Cuſtoms of a Man's "Country. How much more to "know the Statutes of Heaven, and "the Law of Eternity; thoſe immutable and eternal Laws of Juſtice, and Righteouſneſs?—To "know the Will and Pleaſure of the "only Potentate, and Univerſal "King!—*I have ſeen an End to all "Perfection; but thy Commandment "is exceeding broad.*

"Whatever other Knowledge a "Man may acquire, could he, by a "vaſt and imperious Mind, and a "Heart as large as the Sand upon "the Sea Shore, command all the "Knowledge of Art and Nature, of "Words and Things; and yet not "know the Author of his Being, "or the Preſerver of his Life, his "Sovereign and his Judge, his ſecret Refuge in Trouble, his beſt "Friend or worſt Enemy; the Support of his Life, and the Hope of "his Death, his future Happineſs, "and his Portion for ever; he doth "but go to Hell with a great deal "of Wiſdom."

Mr. *Locke* alſo, (to mention no more) juſtly eſteemed one of the greateſt Maſters of Reaſon, and a Philoſopher of the greateſt Freedom of Thought, at the Cloſe of Life, thus ad-

addreſſed an intimate Friend, " Stu-
" dy the Holy Scriptures, eſpecially
" the New Teſtament; therein are
" contained the Words of eternal
" Life. It hath God for its Author,
" Salvation for its End, and Truth
" without any Mixture of Error for
" its Matter." *Poſthumous Works*, p. 344.

Theſe, and ſeveral other Men of the moſt eminent Attainments in Wiſdom and Knowledge, held the Scriptures in the higheſt Veneration and Eſteem, as a Revelation from God, and by their excellent Comments, have acknowledged their divine Authority.

5th. We may reſt aſſured that we have the ſtrongeſt Reaſon to be fully ſatisfied of the Sufficiency of Scripture, as perfectly able to make us wiſe unto Salvation.

The Papiſt will own the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and a true Rule of Faith, but not a ſufficient one; the only ſufficient Rule of Faith he will tell you, is the Church of *Rome*, which infallibly underſtands and propounds what the Chriſtian World is to believe and to do, in order to eternal Salvation, and therefore you ought implicitly to ſubmit your Underſtanding and Conſcience to her Direction and Deciſions, and doing ſo, it is needleſs to conſult the Scriptures, being already provided with a living infallible Guide.

But if the Scriptures are a true Rule of Faith, then are they a ſufficient Rule to all Sorts and Degrees of Perſons; for they expreſly affirm their own Sufficiency in this extenſive Senſe.

6. That nothing but Scripture is a ſufficient Ground to build our Faith and Practice upon, as Chriſtians, will clearly appear to any conſiderate, unprejudiced Perſon. All beſides is Uncertainty and Confuſion; there are Popes againſt Popes, Councils againſt Councils, Fathers againſt Fathers, the Church of one Age againſt the Church of another; and Tradition paſſing through Hands ſo uncertain and inconſiſtent, muſt of Neceſſity loſe all Force of Evidence. Only upon the Rock of Scripture can we find any Reſt or ſolid Comfort, and there have we a ſure Foundation, and an infallible Guide, which we may with the greateſt Certainty and Stedfaſtneſs oppoſe to the Authority of the Church of *Rome*.

Whatever may be pretended to gain that Church the Credit of a Guide, all that and much more may be ſaid for the Scriptures. Doth the Church of *Rome* boaſt Antiquity? The Scriptures are more ancient. Is that Church a Means to keep Chriſtians in Unity? So are the Scriptures to preſerve Unity of Belief in Things neceſſary and plainly revealed, and in Unity of Charity in other Matters.

Following the Scriptures we ſhall follow that which muſt be true, if the Church of *Rome* be true, for ſhe acknowledges the Truth of Scripture; whereas if we follow that Church, we follow that which if the Scripture be, may be falſe, nay, which if the Scriptures

tures be true, muſt be falſe; becauſe the Scriptures teſtify againſt it.

We have God's expreſs Command to follow the Scripture, and no Intimation or Colour of any Prohibition; but to believe in the Church of *Rome*, we have no Command at all, much leſs an expreſs Command; nay, on the contrary, we have a general Prohibition in heſe Words, *Call no Man Maſter upon Earth.*

Following the Scriptures, we ſhall embrace a Religion, which being contrary to Fleſh and Blood, without any Aſſiſtance from worldly Power, Wiſdom, or Policy; nay, againſt all the Power and Policy of the World, prevailed and ſpread itſelf in a ſhort Time over a very great Part of the World.

Whereas it is apparent the Church of *Rome* acquired, and ſtill maintains her Authority over Mens Conſciences, by counterfeiting Miracles, forging Stories, corrupting the Monuments of former Times, by Wars, Perſecutions, Maſſacrees, Treaſons, and Rebellions; in ſhort, by all Manner of carnal, unjuſtifiable Means, whether violent or fraudulent.

Following the Scriptures, we ſhall believe a Religion, the firſt Preachers and Profeſſors whereof could certainly have no worldly End; could neither project, nor promiſe to themſelves by it, any of the Profits, Honours, or Pleaſures of this World, but rather the contrary, even all the Hardſhips the World could lay upon them.

On the other Hand, the Head of the Church of *Rome*, the pretended Vicar of Chriſt, Succeſſor of the Apoſtles, and Guide of Faith, it is palpably evident, makes the Popiſh Religion the Inſtrument of his Ambition, to gratify the Luſt of Dominion, by ſubjecting the Conſcience of all Mankind to his Authority, and all Nations to his Juriſdiction.

Beſides, it is evident to any Man, who has the leaſt Diſcernment, that moſt of thoſe Doctrines, which the *Romiſh* Church adds to the Scriptures, are one way or other calculated to promote the Honour or temporal Profit of the Teachers of them.

Following the Scriptures only, we ſhall embrace a Religion of perfect Simplicity and Purity; conſiſting in a Manner, wholly in the Worſhip of God, in Spirit and Truth, and in ſincere Obedience to his Will. Whereas the *Romiſh* Church and Doctrine are loaded with weak, childiſh, ridiculous, Superſtitions, and Ceremonies, and the moſt groſs and manifeſt Idolatry.

If we follow the Scriptures, we cannot hope for Salvation, without mortifying all Vices, and practiſing all Chriſtian Virtues, which our Reaſon tells us is the only Way in which we can pleaſe the God of Truth and Holineſs.

But the Church of *Rome* opens an eaſier and broader Way to Heaven; and though a Man continues during the Courſe of his Life in Sin, gives him Aſſurance he may be let into Heaven by a back Gate, even by an Act of Attrition, or Grief for Sin, ariſing meerly from the Fear of Puniſh-

niſhment, at the Hour of Death, if it be joined with Confeſſion to a Prieſt, or by an Act of Contrition without it.

Juſt and perfect are the Precepts of Piety and Humility, of Innocence and Patience, of Goodneſs, Temperance, Sobriety, Juſtice, Meekneſs, Fortitude, and Conſtancy, Contempt of the World, the Love of God, and of Mankind; in a Word, of all Virtues and againſt all Vices, which the Scriptures enjoyin us to obſerve and obey, and which, if they were generally obeyed, could not fail to make the World generally happy; and the Goodneſs of them alone is ſufficient to make any wiſe and good Man believe, that the Religion, which inculcates them, comes from God, the Fountain of all Goodneſs.

The Church of *Rome* ever notes, and in a Manner diſſolves and abrogates many of the holy Precepts of the Goſpel, by teaching Men that they are not Laws for all Chriſtians, but Counſels of Perfection, and Matters of Supererogation, which a Man ſhould do well if he obſerves, but ſhall not ſin if he does not obſerve them; that they are for thoſe who aim at high Places in Heavens; but if a Man will be content with an inferior Station there, eſpecially if he be content to taſte of Purgatory in the Way, he need not incumber his Thoughts at preſent with many of the Rules of the Goſpel. Not to ſay that the *Romiſh* Church manifeſtly foments a Spirit of Uncharitableneſs and Cruelty to all Mankind, who profeſs not her Faith; therefore the Religion of this Church is far from being ſo holy or ſo good as the Doctrine of Chriſt delivered in the Scriptures, and conſequently cannot come from the Fountain of Holineſs, Juſtice, Goodneſs and Truth.

Following the Church of *Rome* for our Guide, we ſhall only follow a Combination of deluded, or rather deluding Men, who would cloſe our Eyes, and deny us the Liberty of examining and conſidering whether the Tenets they impoſe are right or wrong; for that Papiſts have no Liberty of Judgment is manifeſt, becauſe they deem it a mortal Sin to doubt of any Part of their Doctrine; whence it follows, that ſeeing every Man muſt reſolve that he will never commit mortal Sin, he muſt never examine the Grounds of Popery, leſt he ſhould be moved to doubt; or if he does examine, he muſt previouſly reſolve, that no Evidence, not even that of Scripture, ſhould move him to doubt, leſt he ſhould fall into a mortal Sin.

As this is plainly the State and Condition of the Members of the *Romiſh* Church, it is evident that they are unwilling and afraid to underſtand; that they have Eyes to ſee, yet wilfully cloſe them; that they have not the Love of the Truth, but are given up to ſtrong Deluſions, and therefore, that in following ſuch a Church and ſuch Guides, we ſhall only follow the Blind, and with them fall into the Ditch.

If we follow the Scriptures, we ſhall follow only the Truth; we ſhall follow a Guide that exhorts us to

keep our Eyes always open to the Truth, to try all Things, to hold faſt that which is good, to try every Spirit, and to bring every Doctrine to the Teſt of God's pure and holy Word; and thus we are at Liberty to review the Ground upon which we ſtand, to correct any Error, and to improve our Minds in the Knowledge and Love of the Truth.

In theſe and ſeveral other Reſpects, the Sufficiency of Scripture to guide us in the Way of Life and Salvation is evidently ſeen, and how dangerous it is to forſake this heavenly Guide, and follow the Deluſions of the Church of *Rome*.

Laſtly, Let us be much in reading the Scriptures, for in them, and them only, have we *the Words of eternal Life*. As the Soul of Man is of an immortal Nature, and made to be happy or miſerable for ever, it highly concerns every Individual of the human Race, ſeriouſly to reflect on the important State, that a waits the Diſſolution of the Soul and Body, which, once fixed, is irrevocable and irreverſible, whether doomed to everlaſting Bliſs or endleſs Miſery.

Now the Chriſtian Religion, being founded on the revealed Will of God, and conſequently the only Means ſufficient to direct us in the Way of everlaſting Life; it is neceſſary to render ourſelves well acquainted with it; and amidſt the many Controverſies which prevail in the World, to examine what Doctrines are moſt agreeable to the pure and infallible Word of God.

I cannot but recommend the Study of the ſacred Scriptures at this Time with peculiar Zeal, as the Emiſſaries of *Rome* are daily gaining Proſelytes, and drawing the unwary from the Faith of the Goſpel.

The more the ſacred Writings are ſtudied and canvaſſed, the brighter and more inconteſtable their Evidence will appear; the more the Bible is conſulted, the more ſhall we be confirmed in the Faith of Chriſt's pure Religion, and conſequently be leſs liable to the Seduction of thoſe, who would impoſe upon our Conſciences the Doctrines of Men.

The two great contending Parties are the Papiſt and the Proteſtant, and theſe mutually charge each other with falſe Doctrines and damnable Errors: We live in a Land, and under a Government, which permit free Enquiry; the Bible is free of Acceſs, to that therefore let us apply, there let us examine into the Merits of the Cauſe, diſcover what is right and what is wrong, reſolving to obey the Truth wherever we find it.

We are not to continue in any Profeſſion, meerly becauſe we were educated in it, but are to examine whether it be the ſame that was taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; we are to obey the Command of the Saviour, bring all that we learn from Teachers of any Denomination to the Touch-ſtone of Truth, and with the *Bereans*, recorded in *Acts* xvii. 11. to *ſearch the Scripture daily whether theſe Things are ſo or no.*

Let us not therefore hazard our eternal Salvation upon the Uncertainty

tainty of groundleſs Opinions, or implicitly aſſent to any Tenets or Principles that may be impoſed by any Man or Body of Men, unleſs upon a ſerious Reviſal, they appear to be founded on the Word of God.

Nothing can make more againſt the Authenticity of the Church of *Rome*, than its forbidding the free Uſe of the Scriptures to its Lay-Members; for if their Religion comes from God, as they pretend, if the Scriptures are the Word of God, as they acknowledge them to be, wherefore are they thus cloſed? If their Doctrines and Practices are agreeable to the Word and Will of God, why do they not bring them to the Law and to the Teſtimony, that ſo they may ſtand approved before the Face of all Men? The Cauſe is evident, the Reaſon is plain; their crafty Teachers are conſcious that many of their Articles of Faith and Modes of Practice are repugnant to the Word of God, and for that Reaſon they conceal that Word, and make the very firſt Article of their Creed *the receiving for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, from whence all the reſt naturally follow, all dependant on that firſt Principle and Root of Error, the admitting of Traditions and human Conſtitutions, for the Foundation of Faith.

On the other Hand, the Religion of the Proteſtants, or that which by Way of Diſtinction from the *Romiſh*, is called the *reformed* Church, receives ample Confirmation from its permitting not only the Eccleſiaſtics, but the meaneſt and moſt illiterate of its Members to read the Bible; nay, not only permitting, but enjoining the reading of it, both in publick and private every Day.

Such an open, ſuch an ingenuous Conduct, plainly ſhews, that the reformed Church is not aſhamed of the Doctrine ſhe profeſſes, that ſhe deſires to gain Converts, not thro' the Blindneſs and Ignorance of Mankind, but through their Knowledge and Conviction of the Truth, as founded upon the Infallibility, not of Man, (for that cannot be in the Nature of Things) but of God, one of whoſe peculiar Attributes is Truth, without any Mixture of Error.

If according to the Tenor of Scripture, it muſt be the grand Object of the Regard of all who would ſerve God acceptably, ſurely it cannot be ſtudied and conſulted too much; and conſequently, the reading of it cannot be too warmly urged upon ſuch as profeſs their Belief in it.

Attend not therefore to the Suggeſtions of any Popiſh Emiſſaries, who would inſinuate that there are many different Opinions of the learned concerning ſome Parts of the Bible; that it is ſo penned that few can underſtand it; and therefore, that the Gifts of Infallibility is veſted in their Church, as the grand Directory of all its Members.

We have already obſerved, and we deſire to repeat it again and again, upon this Occaſion, when the Enemy is coming in like a Flood, that the bleſſed Jeſus, the glorious Redeemer, the Captain of our Salvation, has enjoined all his Followers to *call no Man Maſter upon Earth.*

The only Antidote againſt the

Growth of Popery amongſt us, is the Bible; that is the Standard which muſt be lifted up againſt it, that preſcribes the Shield of Faith, and the Helmet of Salvation; with which arrayed, the ſincere, though weak and even illiterate Chriſtian, ſhall be able to ward off the moſt powerful Attacks of the Enemy, and to come off Conqueror, and more than Conqueror.

In ſhort, there is no other Method of eſtabliſhing our Minds in the Principles of our holy Religion, than by frequently converſing with the Word of God. Here we ſhall ſee the Glory and Excellency of the divine Will; thus we ſhall feel the Power of divine Grace upon our Hearts; thus our Underſtandings will gradually be enlightened with divine Knowledge, and to our unſpeakable Comfort we ſhall grow up into the Stature of perfect Men in Chriſt Jeſus, by delighting ourſelves in the Law of the Lord, and daily meditating therein.

Thoſe who devote their Time (that is, ſuch Parts of it as are conſiſtent with their Avocations in Life) to the Study of God's holy Will, as plainly ſet forth in his bleſſed Word, will be under the ſpecial Bleſſing of Heaven, and like Trees planted in a fruitful Soil, ſhall grow and flouriſh, and riſe infinitely higher than all the Honours, Wealth and Enjoyments of this World; they ſhall riſe to Immortality, and there find all the glorious Fruits of a Life of Faith and Obedience, and the full Accompliſhment of the magnificent Promiſe, which here on Earth they with Pleaſure peruſed in the Word of God.

The Scriptures, in a Word, contain every Thing that is eſſentially neceſſary to be known for the Happineſs of Man, both preſent and future. Happineſs is greatly miſtaken by the Generality of Mankind, both as to its Nature and Source; they vainly conceive it to be the Gratification of ſenſual Deſires, and therefore erroneouſly place it in the Acquiſition of Riches and Honours; whereas it conſiſts in refined and ſpiritual Senſations, in an Exemption from the Predominance of animal and worldly Affections, and can only be obtained by a comfortable Aſſurance of an Intereſt in the divine Favour, which can alone confer preſent and future Peace of Mind, without which there can be no Happineſs.

Now the Word of God plainly repreſents the State of Man by Nature, the Penalty of the broken Law of God, his Recovery by Jeſus Chriſt, and the Method of conveying Grace here, and Glory hereafter, in and through Him. The Word of God contains a grand Rule not only of Faith, but likewiſe of Practice, by following which we muſt be good Men, good Chriſtians, and finally ſuch as God would have us to be. which important End, that it may be anſwered by this ſincere Attempt to vindicate the Authority, and enforce the Study of the Holy Scriptures, may God of his infinite Mercy grant, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

F I N I S.